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INCURSION

Knights of the Lich-Queen

Polyhedron 59

RPGA NETWORK

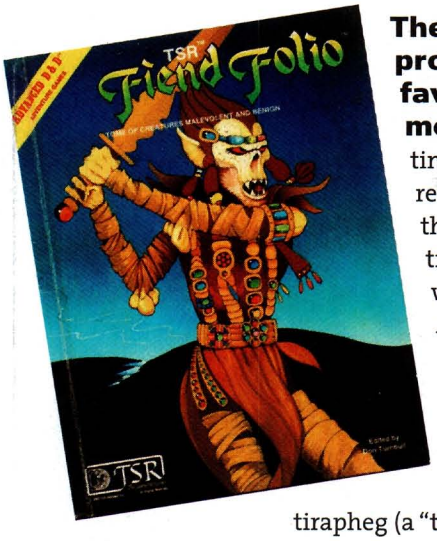
d20 system

Rise of the Githyanki

First Watch

Previews, notes & news on the world of d20 gaming

From Fiend Folio to Incursion



The *Fiend Folio* is probably my favorite original monster book. Long-time readers might remember our tribute to the "less inspiring" treasures of that tome way back in *Polyhedron* #141, which kicked off a contest to determine the "suckiest" monster from a book that contained such gems as the tirapheg (a "tripedal hermaphrodite"), the enveloper (picture a really fat doughman with no fingers who just wants a hug), and the adherer (a sticky mummy). Our winner? The C.I.F.A.L. (Colonial Insect-Formed Artificial Life).

But the *Fiend Folio* had more than just lovable losers like the al-mi'raj, carbuncle, caterwaul, clubnek, denzelian, dire corby, disenchanter, Yan-C-Bin, flail snail, flumph, gorbel, imorph, lava child, phantom stalker, protien polymorph, sheet phantom, thork, umpleby, volt, and xvart. The book also included a handful of creatures that have gone on to become icons in the 22 years since the *Fiend Folio's* publication. Most D&D players would recognize the grell, grimlock, hook horror, kenku, mephit, retriever, revenant, shadow demon, son of kyuss, and xill.

But four of the most remarkable *Fiend Folio* creatures, the githyanki, githzerai, slaads, and death knight, are noteworthy not just because they've withstood the test of time to become undeniable "classic" D&D monsters, but because they were designed by one man.

Charlie Stross, a young British D&D fan, had contributed a handful of creatures to editor Don Turnbull's "Fiend Factory" monster column in *White Dwarf* magazine, then a general-interest gaming periodical. When Turnbull joined TSR UK and began work on the monster book that would become the *Fiend Folio*, Stross polished up his original creations, added a couple more, and forwarded his submissions to Turnbull, who later published them in their final form.

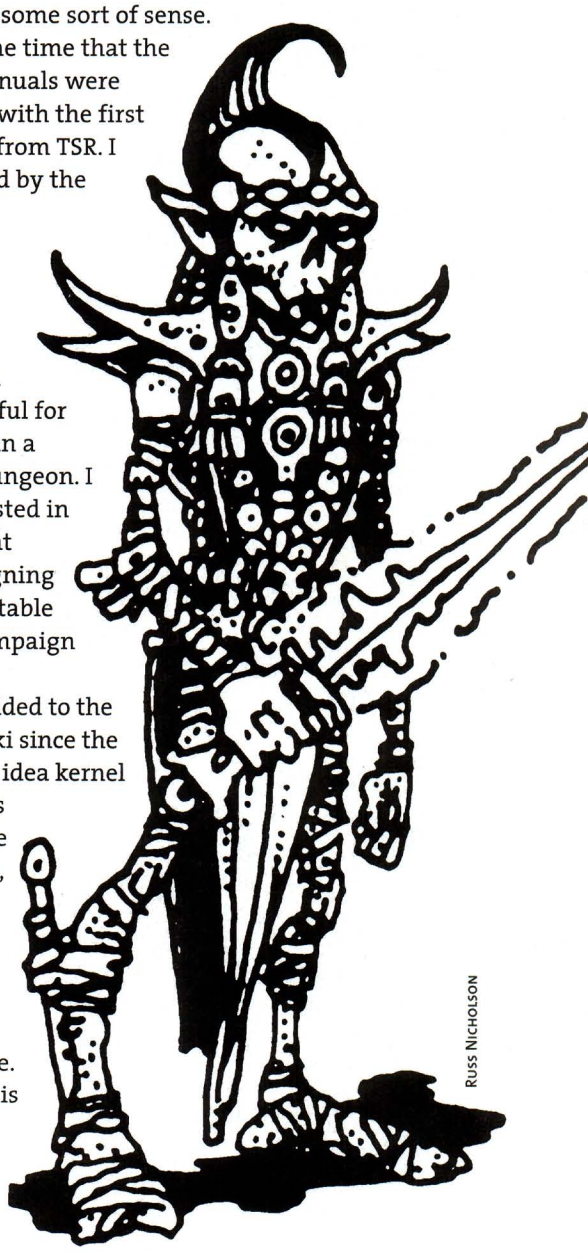
I recently caught up with Charlie Stross, who left D&D about the time he went to university, totally unaware of the impact his creatures would have on D&D fans and writers. He's now a full-time science fiction novelist with two Hugo nominations and a Nebula Award nomination to his credit. Stross' newest novel, *Singularity Sky*, will be published as an Ace hardcover in August, and he has four additional novels under contract with Ace, Tor, and Golden Gryphon. Charlie Stross has come a long way since his *Fiend Folio* days, and so have his monsters.

I asked Stross about his most impactful creation, the githyanki who serve as the focus for this month's *Dragon/Dungeon/Polyhedron* crossover, *Incursion*.

"With the githyanki, I wanted a whole civilization that made some sort of sense. This was around the time that the original AD&D manuals were coming out, along with the first dungeon modules from TSR. I was very impressed by the treatment of dark elves in the early modules, and thought having a full-blown underground civilization was a lot more useful for your campaign than a boring standard dungeon. I was getting interested in the psionics rules at the time, and designing a monster type suitable for that kind of campaign made sense."

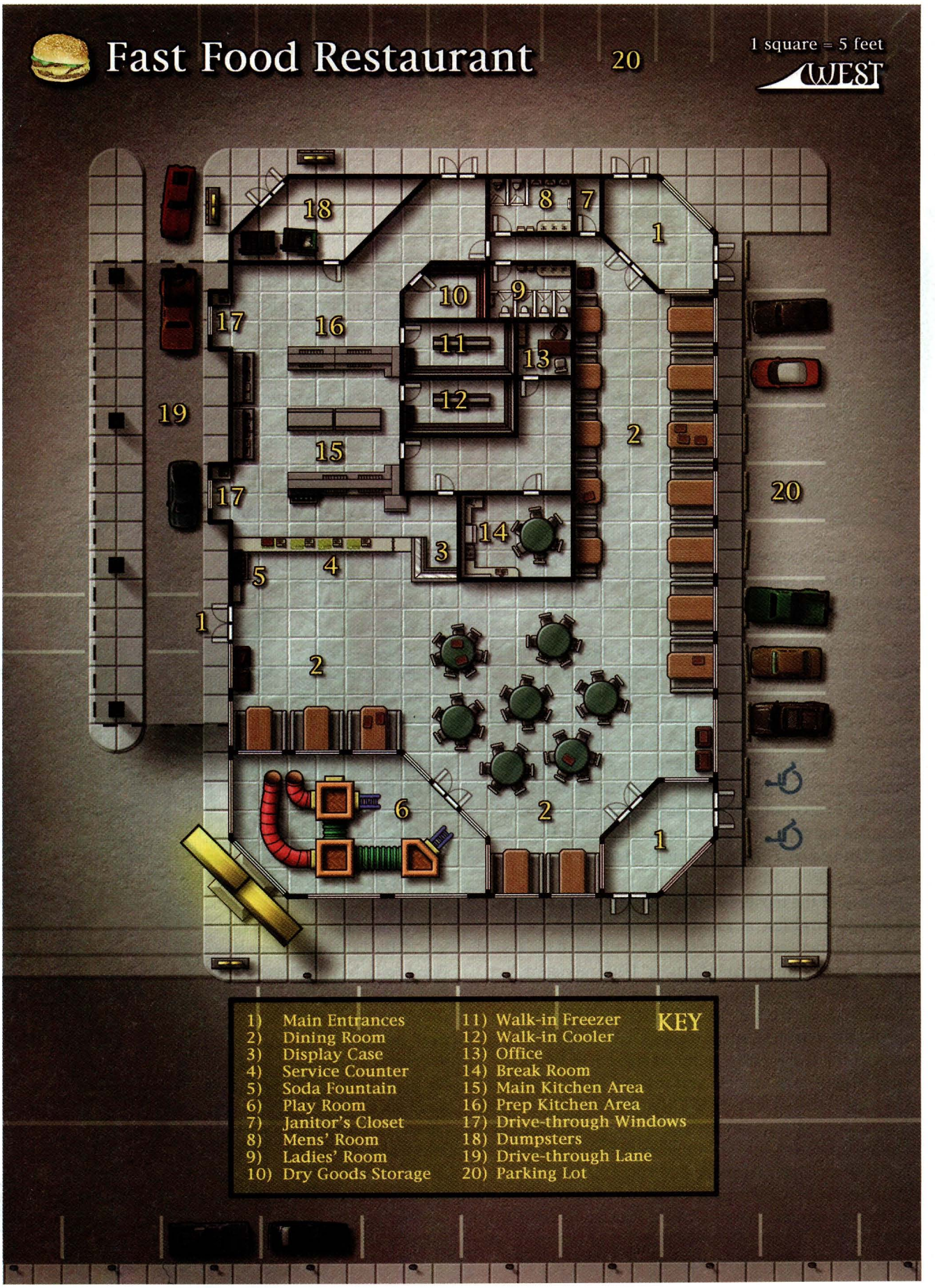
A lot has been added to the lore of the githyanki since the *Fiend Folio*, but the idea kernel that make the giths so compelling came from Charlie Stross, the teenaged D&D fan who, quite by accident, created one of the most compelling D&D creatures of all time. Thanks, Charlie! This one's for you.

—Erik Mona



Russ Nicholson

Cartography by Christopher West



INCURSION

Knights of the Lich-Queen

by James Wyatt

A Polyhedron Mini-Game of Githyanki Invasion

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Introduction

Knights of the Lich-Queen is a d20 game of githyanki warfare. The player characters in this game are githyanki, servants of the Lich-Queen bent on the conquest of a Material Plane world. Their allies are limited to the half-dragon duthka'gith, while their enemies are many—the marshaled forces of an entire world. But the greatest of all possible rewards awaits: sweet oblivion in the undying arms of the Lich-Queen herself, who rewards her greatest heroes by incorporating them into her own being.

Knights of the Lich-Queen uses the d20 System, as based on the newly-revised D&D *Player's Handbook*. In fact, this game is really just a D&D variant, where characters play evil githyanki rather than good or neutral humans, dwarves, halflings, and so on. You can use any D&D product that seems appropriate in a *Knights of the Lich-Queen* game with little difficulty. This game simply adds everything you need to know to play githyanki: new prestige classes and equipment, extensive historical and cultural information to help you get inside a githyanki's head, and a campaign backdrop of invasion that will keep githyanki characters busy as they seek glory in the Lich-Queen's service.

On the other hand, this game also can provide useful material for a regular D&D campaign where the player characters are fighting off the githyanki invasion, as described in "Incursion: A World Under Siege" in *Dragon Magazine* #309. The Dungeon Master of such a campaign can use the equipment, prestige classes, monsters, and other information in this game to make the githyanki more interesting and deadly opponents for the PCs in such a D&D campaign.

This Polyhedron d20 System Mini-Game requires the Dungeons & Dragons *Player's Handbook* to play. Polyhedron Mini-Games adapt the standard D&D or d20 Modern rules and conventions to nonstandard settings and genres. Unless specifically noted in the text, this Mini-Game follows the core Dungeons & Dragons rules. If you know how to play Dungeons & Dragons, you'll pick up the rules of this game in moments.

Knights of the Lich-Queen utilizes game mechanics developed for the new Dungeons & Dragons game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison. This Wizards of the Coast game contains no Open Game Content.

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Based on the original Dungeons & Dragons game by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.
Githyanki originally created by Charles Stross.

DEREK THOMPSON

Chapter 1: A Brief History of the Githyanki

The earliest origins of the githyanki (and their close cousins, the githzerai) lie on the ruins of some unknown Material-Plane world, where the ancestors of githkind were a proud and mighty human civilization. In long-distant ages, a vast empire of mind flayers conquered this world, adding it to their planet-spanning empire and utterly subjugating all its races. They enslaved the ancestors of the gith, breeding them to be effective warriors for the mind flayer cause—much like grimlocks now serve the mind flayers as warriors and bodyguards. Through their long years of slavery, the ancestors of the gith races slowly changed in ways both subtle and obvious until they were no longer recognizable as the humans they once were. In particular, they developed their inherent psionic abilities, which led eventually to their liberation.

A psionic foe, no matter how submissive, is a more serious threat to a mind flayer than a nonpsionic one, and the giths were bred as warriors, not meek mind-slaves. With the development of their psionic powers, the giths became more difficult to control, and their mind flayer masters grew increasingly brutal in their attempts to keep them subservient and obedient. A number of small-scale revolts arose among the giths as among other populations of slaves, but all were quickly and brutally suppressed.

Then came Gith. Little is known for sure about this heroic woman, despite the wealth of legends told about her among the githyanki to this day. Some tales say that she was a powerful slave to a powerful illithid master, serving as the creature's personal bodyguard and a champion of the illithid empire; others claim that she was nothing more than a lowly footsoldier and barely more than a child. Whatever the truth, she grew to hate the mind flayers and successfully organized the revolt that liberated her people and sent the illithid empire on its first step toward utter ruin.

Something about Gith—her great charisma, an ability to form alliances among different groups of rebellious slaves, or perhaps just the consuming fire of her hatred and rage—made her successful where so many others had failed miserably. Under her leadership, slaves rose up like a mighty wave to sweep away the foundations of the illithid empire. At her command, the followers of Gith launched a crusade to topple every mind flayer stronghold and annihilate the illithids. This crusade, however, was sabotaged by a splinter group led by one Zerthimon, who claimed Gith was leading her people into a new form of slavery, the illithid empire replaced by Gith's tyrannical new realm. Civil war replaced unholy crusade, and the gith peoples—githzerai, the followers of Zerthimon, and githyanki, the "true children of Gith"—were forever sundered.

Too weakened by years of civil war to pursue their crusade against the illithids, the githyanki retreated to fortresses on the Astral Plane, where they have lived ever since. Soon after their establishment on the Astral Plane, a wizard named Vlaakith began advising Gith on matters of state. In search of allies, Vlaakith first appealed to the slaadi, natives of Limbo, seeking to enlist them to help destroy the githzerai. The chaotic slaadi were not interested in any kind of agreement, so Vlaakith turned next to a deity of conquest: the dragon goddess Tiamat. Gith herself ventured into the Nine Hells to meet with Tiamat.

Only speculative legend tells what happened in this meeting, but the results are well-documented. Although Gith herself has not been seen since, Ephelomon—a fiendish red dragon who serves as one of Tiamat's consorts—traveled to the Astral Plane to give Vlaakith word of the agreement that had been reached. To aid the githyanki in their unending mission of conquest, red dragons would forever be the allies of the githyanki race. In addition, Ephelomon proclaimed that Gith had named Vlaakith as her successor, to lead the githyanki and carry on Gith's legacy of conquest. He would not say what happened to Gith.

Vlaakith is now as much a title as a name, borne for the past thousand years by a Lich-Queen who is perhaps the greatest of her line. With the power only undeath can grant, the current Vlaakith has finally called for a new crusade, and all the power of the githyanki musters at her command. Bringing the ancient dragon pact to new levels, Vlaakith has bred a race of half-dragon commanders, superwarriors called duthka'gith. She has raised the standards of war and named a target: a world on the Material Plane called Pharagos. Now the armies of the githyanki march for conquest once more, on a scale not seen since the nearly forgotten time when githyanki and githzerai were one.

A History of Hate: Illithids and Githzerai

Although their history stretches back to a time before many Material Plane worlds were born, it is the beginning of that long story that shapes the minds and hearts of living githyanki more than any other event over the intervening millennia. Their origins in slavery and the revolt of Zerthimon are the two defining events in githyanki history, the events by which they still define who they are—by whom they hate.

Githyanki loathing of the mind flayers runs so deep as to be unfathomable. Every githwarrior, warlock, and multiclass gish must, as part of her early training, participate in an illithid hunting party as a ritual of initiation. These githyanki units travel to the Material Plane to find illithids and slay as many as possible before returning home. This racial ritual cements each githyanki's place in the history of her people as she participates in a small-scale reenactment of Gith's war of liberation. A hunting party of this sort is usually led by a knight of 7th to 9th level and made up of a warlock or gish of 5th to 7th level and three to nine githwarriors and warlocks of 1st to 3rd level. When the githyanki become aware of multiple mind flayers lairing together, they often send larger groups to hunt them. These missions generally include githwarriors and warlocks of 4th to 6th level, since they are too dangerous for unproven striplings.

There are some githyanki, of course, who make this deep hatred of mind flayers into a lifelong obsession, specializing in hunting mind flayers and exterminating them. The gish mindslayer prestige class detailed in the next chapter provides one example of the skills and techniques such hunters use. The best offense against a mind flayer, as the githyanki know well, is a good defense—specifically, protection against its *mind blast* and other psionic abilities. Many would-be illithid hunters take the Iron Will and Improved Spell Resistance feats early in their careers, then seek out magical protection against mind-affecting spells. Once they are high enough level, their innate *dimension door* ability allows them to circumvent legions of enthralled minions to reach an illithid master.

This hatred of illithids is the only passion that surpasses the githyanki hatred of the githzerai, whom they refuse to honor with Gith's name, calling them simply zerths, Zerth-lovers, or betrayers of Gith. Warfare against the githzerai is not such an integral part of every githyanki's life as the illithid-hunting ritual, perhaps because Zerthimon's revolt is much more of an embarrassment to the githyanki than their glorious rebellion against the mind flayers. All the same, each githyanki city launches an assault into the depths of Limbo to strike at the githzerai at least once a year. The fortresses of the githzerai on Limbo are virtually unassailable, so the githyanki generally strike at caravans or smaller compounds, seeking to cause as much damage and fear as possible before withdrawing. For their part, the githzerai frequently launch full-scale assaults on githyanki fortress-cities on the Astral Plane, resulting in huge battles with many casualties, but no real victory for either side.

Few githyanki are truly obsessed with their hatred of the githzerai. A great many githyanki rangers have githzerai as a favored enemy, but they choose higher bonuses against mind flayers. All githwarriors and warlocks study tactics to use against their ancient foes, but these tactics are relatively straightforward: use magic to match their monks' mobility, *dispel magic* to remove the beneficial spells cast by their sorcerers, and strike hard and often to pound them into submission.

Russ Nicholson

Chapter 2: Githyanki Characters

Vinod Rams

This chapter includes full racial descriptions for githyanki and the half-githyanki/half-fiendish red dragons known as duthka'gith, information about classes and prestige classes for these characters, and new feats for their use—in short, everything you need to create a githyanki character and begin your conquest of Pharagos in the name of the Lich-Queen.

Githyanki

Githyanki are the descendants of a humanlike race enslaved by mind flayers for millennia. Exiled on the Astral Plane since time immemorial, they are returning to the Material Plane in a grand crusade at the Lich-Queen's command. Their target is a world called Pharagos, and their goal nothing less than the annihilation of every sentient creature that dares to dwell there. The player characters in *Knights of the Lich-Queen* are assumed to be part of this invading force. (See Chapter 5 for more information about the invasion.)

Personality: Githyanki are a living contradiction: ruthlessly cruel and sadistically violent toward almost all nongithyanki, but unfailingly polite, respectful, even refined among their own kind. The key to this paradox is their self-identity: the githyanki have never forgotten that they were slaves of the mind flayers for generations, and they blame everyone but themselves for that fact. A thousand years of hatred and resentment has corrupted the entire culture of the githyanki into a seething cauldron of violence directed toward anything that is not included in their own circle of fellows.

Physical Description: Githyanki appear superficially human, similar in size and proportion. Tall and gaunt, they average 6 1/4 feet tall and typically weigh around 170 pounds. They possess rough, leathery skin, pale yellow in color, and red or black hair (often pulled into one or more topknots). Their black eyes are sunken deep into their long, angular skulls, their noses are small and highly placed, and their ears are pointed and serrated in back. They favor elaborate dress and baroque armor.

Relations: The githyanki hate almost everyone. At the top of their list are the mind flayers who enslaved them and engendered the hatred that defines them, followed closely by their cousins, the githzerai. (See **A History of Hatred** in Chapter 1 for more information.) The denizens of the Lower Planes are perhaps the only creatures the githyanki ever count as allies: they have an ancient pact with a red dragon consort of Tiamat, and ally with demons and devils more often than with any other creature. "Good relations," to the githyanki, generally means "sharing a military alliance," and the quality of those relations shifts as quickly as fortunes in war.

Alignment: Githyanki are always evil, although they can be lawful, neutral, or chaotic in temper. Nonevil githyanki are one-in-a-million exceptions, and githyanki who stray so far from their heritage as to adopt a good alignment are completely unheard of.

Githyanki Lands: Githyanki are native to the Astral Plane, though their ancestors were humans from the Material Plane in ages past. They build fortress-cities on chunks of floating Astral rock or even on the corpses of dead deities that drift through that otherwise barren plane. They enjoy the conquest of other races and cultures, however, and have fortress-outposts established on many planes and many Material-Plane worlds. In addition to these overt sites, the githyanki maintain secret brood-chambers scattered throughout the Material Plane, and are quite adept at operating secretly among humans in particular.

Religion: Githyanki owe allegiance to their Lich-Queen alone, who forbids the worship of deities among her people. Indeed, as a race that often makes its homes on the corpses of dead gods, the githyanki are not inclined to revere these all-too-finite deities. See **The Great Taboo** in Chapter 2 for more information.

Language: Githyanki speak their own language, which they treat as a sacred secret, never using it around members of other races. They also speak Common, and many know Draconic as well. In general, githyanki disdain learning the languages of other creatures, with dragons, demons, and devils being the most common exceptions.

Names: Calli'tao, Geatroth, Gharvag, Karluth, Khlasath, Khosuvh, Madivh, N'a'rai, Quith, Rech, Ris'a'n, Tehv'in.

Adventurers: Githyanki rarely adventure in the way that humans, elves, dwarves, and other races typically understand that term. For githyanki, an adventure is a military operation, strictly regimented, led by a military commander, and ultimately directed by the Lich-Queen herself. It is not an opportunity for self-aggrandizement or the acquisition of personal wealth. Githyanki "adventurers," then, are soldiers in the army of the Lich-Queen, cooperating on missions to achieve her goals.

In the context of the invasion of Pharagos, most player character parties consist of scouting groups, skirmish forces, or tactical strike teams. See Chapter 5 for adventure suggestions and advice about running a campaign of this nature.

Githyanki Racial Traits

- +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, –2 Wisdom. Githyanki are hardy and agile, but their utter subservience to their Lich-Queen has weakened both their willpower and their sanity.
- Medium-size. As Medium-size creatures, githyanki have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Githyanki base speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision: Githyanki can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
- Psionics: 3/day—*daze humanoid* and *mage hand*. In addition, githyanki of 3rd level or higher can use *blur* three times per day, githyanki of 6th level or higher can use *dimension door* three times per day, and githyanki of 9th level or higher can use *telekinesis* three times per day and *plane shift* once per day. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the githyanki's level. The DCs of these abilities are Charisma based.
- Spell Resistance: A githyanki has spell resistance of 5 + 1 per character level.
- Extraplanar: Although Githyanki are humanoids, they are native to the Astral Plane and are thus susceptible to *banishment* and similar spells when they are on other planes.

Vital Statistics

Githyanki live roughly twice as long as humans, nearly 200 years, although their aging process is distorted by the timelessness of the Astral Plane. Since time does not pass on that plane, githyanki do not age—until they leave it. Eggs are hatched and young githyanki reared on the Material Plane (or, occasionally, one of several outer planes), and most githyanki spend the majority of their adult lives on the Astral Plane, not aging another day. As long as they remain on the Astral Plane, they could theoretically live forever, but as soon as they leave its timelessness the weight of years catches up with them instantaneously. Duthka'giths live 350 years on average.

Table 2–1: Random Starting Ages

Race	Adulthood	Barbarian Rogue Sorcerer	Bard Fighter Paladin Ranger	Cleric Druid Monk Wizard
Githyanki	20 years	+1d8	+2d6	+4d6
Duthka'gith	40 years	+3d6	+5d6	+7d6

Table 2–2: Aging Effects

Race	Middle Age*	Old**	Venerable†	Maximum Age
Githyanki	75 years	113 years	150 years	+4d20 years
Duthka'gith	125 years	188 years	250 years	+2d% years

* –1 to Str, Con, and Dex; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

** –2 to Str, Con, and Dex; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

† –3 to Str, Con, and Dex, +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

Table 2–3: Random Height and Weight

Race	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Githyanki, man	5' 4"	+2d10	115 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Githyanki, woman	4' 11"	+2d10	80 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Duthka'gith, man	5' 10"	+2d8	155 lb.	× (2d6) lb.
Duthka'gith, woman	5' 5"	+2d8	120 lb.	× (2d6) lb.

•Level Adjustment +2: Githyanki are more powerful than members of the standard races, and advance in levels more slowly. A githyanki's effective character level (ECL) is equal to his total class levels +2. Thus, a 1st-level githyanki fighter is considered a 3rd-level character and must earn 6,000 XP to reach 2nd level.

• Automatic Languages: Githyanki. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal, and Undercommon.

• Favored Class: Fighter. A multiclass githyanki's fighter class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

Duthka'gith

In preparation for this invasion of Pharagos, Vlaakith the Lich-Queen has secretly been breeding a race of superwarriors—the duthka'gith. Half githyanki, the duthka'gith also claim descent from the seed of Ephelomon, the fiendish red dragon consort of Tiamat.

Personality: Duthka'giths are stronger, faster, and smarter than their githyanki parents, and they know it. They combine the cruel violence of the githyanki with the arrogance of dragons, and care little for the complex niceties of githyanki society. Where the githyanki are refined, the duthka'gith are boorish and savage. The threat of violence, obvious or implied, pollutes their every dealing, whether with outsiders (nongithyanki), fullblooded githyanki, or other duthka'gith.

Physical Description: Duthka'giths have lost most of the githyanki similarity to humans. They average close to 7 feet tall and are considerably heavier than githyanki, averaging more than 210 pounds. Their skin has a definite scaled texture to it and ranges from deep red (primarily on the shoulders and back) to orange (on the palms, soles of the feet, and belly). Their hair is shaggy and wild, resisting any attempt to pull it into the formal topknots the githyanki favor. Their ears are slightly larger in proportion to their heads than a githyanki's are, but share the same serrated back edge. Their eyes gleam red, suggesting glowing black embers.

Relations: Duthka'giths share all the enemies of the githyanki, which is to say almost everyone. Their relationship with the githyanki themselves varies from individual to individual, but generally is strained at best. The duthka'giths look down on the githyanki but work closely together with them. Every duthka'gith considers itself a born leader, which is not far from the truth, but as a result they quickly become frustrated when forced to accept an inferior position of any sort.

Alignment: Like githyanki, duthka'giths are always evil, and they tend strongly toward chaos (though not exclusively, because of Ephelomon's connection to the lawful plane of the Nine Hells).

Duthka'gith Lands: Duthka'giths have no lands of their own, and share living space with githyanki.

Religion: Like githyanki, duthka'giths are loyal to the Lich-Queen above all and consider the gods inferior, mortal beings undeserving of worship. Duthka'giths are not generally prone to the weakness of worship, but they tend to be particularly drawn to the messianic cult of Gith (see **The Great Taboo** in Chapter 3). In fact, many duthka'gith believe that Gith was transformed into a half-dragon during her stay in the Nine Hells, and that the breeding of the fist duthka'gith is a sign that Gith's return is imminent.

Language: Duthka'giths speak the githyanki language and Draconic. Many also speak Common, but they share the common githyanki disdain for the languages and culture of other species.

Names: Duthka'giths usually carry githyanki names.

Adventurers: Vlaakith bred the duthka'giths to lead the githyanki in the invasion—to serve as generals, sergeants, and champions of her mighty army. This vision has not fully materialized, thanks in large part to the unforeseen strongly chaotic bent of the duthka'giths. Duthka'giths are indeed born leaders, but many of them demonstrate such impatience with the regimentation of githyanki life that they strike out independently, sometimes forming small, elite units made up entirely of their own kind to attack Pharagos in their own way, sometimes working

Githyanki Language and Names

The githyanki language looks intimidating when transliterated, primarily because of the proliferation of apostrophes. An apostrophe is actually not pronounced, but simply represents the connection of separate morphemes into a single word. For example, in the title gish'sarath, the apostrophe connects two independent units of meaning: gish, or "skilled," meaning a githyanki who uses both weapons and spells, and sarath, a modification of sarth, usually translated as "sergeant," a commander of the smallest military unit in the githyanki armies. It is pronounced gish´-sahr-ath´, with no vocalization of the apostrophe except perhaps a slight pause.

Githyanki favor names with initial velar consonants such as C (pronounced farther back in the throat than K), G, GH (harder than a G), K, KH (like the Scottish ch in loch), and Q. Less commonly, names begin with M, N, R, S, T, TH, V, or VL. A githyanki's name has no linguistic meaning, but is a badge of honor. Githyanki do not tolerate others mispronouncing, abbreviating, or mocking their names. A githyanki who has had the privilege of training with a great hero of the race often adds his mentor's name to his own, adding the prefix gi'- ("student of") to the trainer's name. Students of the renowned swordsman Khlasath, for example, append gi'Khlasath to their own names. A student of Khlasath who dishonored his teacher's name by his performance in battle would stop using Khlasath's name or risk angering his teacher and every other student of his renowned teacher.

alone to wreak destruction on whatever they happen to find. In this way as in many others, duthka'giths manifest both the best and the worst aspects of their fiendish, draconic, and githyanki ancestry.

Duthka'gith Racial Traits

- +8 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, –2 Wisdom, +2 Charisma. Duthka'giths have the great physical strength and hardiness of their dragon parent, as well as the characteristics of the githyanki.
- Medium-size. As Medium-size creatures, duthka'giths have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Duthka'gith base speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision: Duthka'giths can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
- Low-light Vision: Duthka'giths can see twice as far as humans in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- Psionics: 3/day—*daze humanoid* and *mage hand*. In addition, duthka'giths of 3rd level or higher can use *blur* three times per day, duthka'giths of 6th level or higher can use *dimension door* three times per day, and duthka'giths of 9th level or higher can use *telekinesis* three times per day and *plane shift* once per day. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the duthka'gith's level. The DCs of these abilities are Charisma based.
- Spell Resistance: A duthka'gith has spell resistance of 5 + 1 per character level.
- Dragon: Duthka'giths are creatures of the dragon type. This makes them vulnerable to certain spells and immune to others, including spells that specifically target humanoids. Like all dragons, they are immune to *sleep* and paralysis effects.
- Extraplanar: Duthka'giths are native to the Astral Plane and are thus susceptible to *banishment* and similar spells when they are on other planes.
- Breath Weapon (Su): Once per day, a duthka'gith can breathe a cone of fire to sear its enemies. This is a 30-foot cone that deals 6d8 points of fire damage to creatures within it. A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + the duthka'gith's Constitution modifier) reduces the damage by half.
- Natural Weapons: A duthka'gith can attack with its claws and bite. Its bite deals 1d6 points of damage (plus one-half the duthka'gith's Strength modifier), while its two claw attacks each deal 1d4 (plus the duthka'gith's Strength bonus).
- Natural Armor Bonus: +4.
- Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a duthka'gith can smite good, dealing extra damage equal to its character level against a good opponent.
- Energy Resistance: A duthka'gith is immune to fire and has cold resistance 5.
- Spell Resistance: A duthka'gith has spell resistance equal to 5 + its total character level, to a maximum of 25 at 20th level.
- Githyanki Blood: For all special abilities and effects, a duthka'gith is considered a githyanki. Duthka'giths, for example, are just as vulnerable to special effects that affect githyanki as their githyanki ancestors.

Duthka'giths also can qualify for prestige classes that require the githyanki race as a prerequisite.

- Level Adjustment +5: Duthka'giths are even more powerful than githyanki, and advance in levels more slowly. A duthka'gith's effective character level (ECL) is equal to his total class levels +5. Thus, a 1st-level duthka'gith fighter is considered a 6th-level character and must earn 21,000 XP to reach 2nd level.
- Automatic Languages: Githyanki and Common. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Infernal.
- Favored Class: Fighter. A multiclass duthka'gith's fighter class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

Mercenaries for the Lich-Queen

The githyanki are not prone to alliances with any other race or organization. They are so strongly convinced of their own superiority, and so innately distrustful of nongithyanki, that the best relationship they can hope for with a potential ally is that of a mercenary. In fact, the githyanki often hire mercenary clerics devoted to evil gods in order to make up for their relative shortage of healing magic. Half-fiends are particularly common in this role. If your DM allows it, you can play a character of virtually any race serving as mercenaries in the Lich-Queen's armies, as long as you're willing to play the cleric.

Classes and Prestige Classes

Because of their absolute loyalty to their Lich-Queen, githyanki do not adopt the cleric or druid classes. It is not that they are incapable of divine spellcasting—githyanki rangers and blackguards can cast limited divine spells—but rather that the Lich-Queen forbids her subjects to rely on divine power rather than her own. A tiny handful of outcast githyanki clerics prove the rule by their exception: only by utterly abandoning githyanki society and the yoke of the Lich-Queen can a githyanki advance in these classes. Any other class is available to them, however, although fighters and wizards predominate among them.

Githyanki think more in terms of an individual's role in their culture of unceasing warfare than in terms of character class, and those roles fall into three categories: githwarriors, who engage in physical combat with melee or ranged weapons, or unarmed; warlocks, who use arcane spells to bombard the enemies of the githyanki; and gish, who use both techniques of warfare. Githwarriors include not only fighters, but also barbarians, monks, rangers, and rogues, and the githyanki make little distinction among members of those classes. Characters who multiclass within the githwarrior classes are still considered githwarriors, not gish: a fighter/barbarian or a monk/rogue still serves the same essential function in

battle as a single-classed character. Warlocks are both sorcerers and wizards: although the githyanki certainly recognize them as different approaches to arcane spellcasting, they share equal respect and serve equal functions in the githyanki armies. (If you use the *Psionics Handbook* in your game, psions are also considered warlocks.) Gish include multiclass characters with expertise in both combat roles, gith-warrior and warlock. They are most commonly fighter/wizards, but monk/sorcerers and rogue/wizards are also gish. In addition, single-classed bards are considered gish because of their diversity of skills, blending weapon use and magical proficiency. (Likewise, if you use psionics in your game, single-classed psychic warriors are considered gish.)

Barbarian

Found only in certain githyanki settlements, barbarians are githwarriors with a rage ability called umitl'a'ikith, "touch of the sword spirit," named for the undead githyanki knights who sometimes animate the swords they used in life. This word suggests the mystical reverence with which the githyanki view raging barbarians, who—like the tl'a'ikith spirits—are unpredictable, even uncontrollable, but ferociously deadly in battle. Considering that the githyanki view martial skill as more important and valuable than actual accomplishment in battle, barbarians occupy a strange position: they command a great deal of respect, but rarely advance far in rank.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Bard

Githyanki bards are rare, and where they do exist they are a far cry from the roguish minstrels of popular opinion. Their mixture of weapon skills and arcane spells makes them gish, serving the same function in war as the multiclass fighter/wizards who add spell support to martial prowess. Githyanki bards focus their arcane knowledge on battle spells, and use their inspiring abilities to lead warriors into the thick of melee combat. A few bards train to become ghustils (healers), preparing for that position with mastery of the bard's unusual arcane healing spells.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Fighter

Fighters are the most common sort of martial githyanki, defining the essence of the githwarrior role. Fighters are the most skilled of warriors, as displayed in their mastery of combat feats, and thus earn the highest respect among the githwarriors. Most githyanki knights begin their careers as fighters, and the lower commanders of most military units are fighters as well.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*. In addition to the fighter feats detailed in the *Player's Handbook*, githyanki fighters can choose their bonus feats from among the feats marked as fighter feats in this chapter.

Monk

Often considered the exclusive province of the githzerai, monks exist among the githyanki as well. In a martial culture that so highly values ornate armor and weaponry, however, monks are not accorded anything near the respect that fighters claim. In fact, many githyanki suspect the monks in their midst of harboring traitorous sympathies for the githzerai. Be that as it may, githyanki monks hold a place among the disciplined fighting forces of the githwarriors, with small groups of monks often serving as guerrilla units or tactical strike teams, making excellent use of their mobility as well as their martial arts.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ranger

The essential military scouts and archers, githyanki rangers share the role of githwarriors despite their limited spellcasting ability. Githyanki rangers train extensively on the Material Plane (often serving as guards for egg hatcheries) in order to become as familiar as possible with its terrain and environmental conditions, so drastically different from their native plane.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Gith Magic

This spell, developed by githyanki wizards, is useful against Material Plane natives who might try to hinder a githyanki's *dimension door* and *plane shift* abilities by means of spells such as dimensional anchor.

Freedom of Passage
Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 8
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal or touch
Target: You or creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

As *freedom of movement*, but this spell also enables you or the creature you touch to pass through dimensional barriers, including those created by spells such as *forbiddance* and *dimensional lock*, assuming that you possess some means of dimensional travel that would otherwise be blocked by the barrier. The *freedom of passage* spell also allows you to move freely despite a *dimensional anchor* spell cast on you.

Focus: A githyanki *silver sword*.

Rogue

Githyanki rogues are skilled githwarriors who excel both in missions of stealth and in dirty fighting. Many githyanki rogues are multiclass fighters, and wear traditional githyanki armor except when their mission requires the use of stealth or other skills for which heavy armor would be inappropriate. These rogues fight side-by-side (or preferably in a flanking position) with fighters and other githwarriors, distinguished only by their particular skill set.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Sorcerer

As arcane spellcasters, sorcerers belong to the warlock caste. Though sorcerers fill the same role as wizards, the githyanki view them as a completely different kind of spellcaster. As a society that pays careful attention to function and performance, the githyanki recognize the flexibility of sorcerers' casting as a great advantage, while likewise recognizing the severe limitations of their constrained spell selection. Unlike most other races, the githyanki rarely send a sorcerer to do a wizard's job, or vice versa. They value sorcerers for combat-heavy missions, where the best tactic is likely to involve blasting the enemy with *lightning bolt* after *lightning bolt*.

Like sorcerers among other races, githyanki sorcerers trace their power to dragon ancestry; specifically, to the same interbreeding of githyanki and fiendish red dragons that produced the first duthka'gith. Githyanki sorcerers often manifest monstrous features, largely cosmetic, reminiscent of their infernal draconic heritage.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*, except that a 1st-level sorcerer can choose the path of the duthka'ariy in lieu of the ability to acquire a familiar.

The Duthka'ariy: Sorcerers who choose this option manifest their draconic heritage as they advance levels, but they can never acquire a familiar. A sorcerer of the duthka'ariy gains the following benefits as he advances in level:

Sorcerer Level	Duthka'ariy Features
1–4	*Natural Weapons:* The character gains the benefit of the Improved Unarmed Strike feat. *Keen Senses:* The character gains the benefit of the Alertness feat.
5–8	*Natural Armor:* The character gains a natural armor bonus of +1.
9–12	*Keen Senses:* The character's darkvision extends to 120 feet
13–16	*Fire Focus:* The character casts fire spells at +1 caster level.
17–20	*Fire Resistance:* The character gains fire resistance 10.

Wizard

The githyanki value sorcerers highly for their ability to produce the same spell effect over and over. They value wizards, however, for their ability to produce just the spell needed for a specific occasion. The Lich-Queen (herself a wizard) sends other wizards on missions which require more than just magical artillery assaults—reconnaissance, breaking and entering, and even the occasional diplomatic foray (usually involving negotiations with demons or devils) are jobs that require a wizard's versatile hand.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Assassin

Unlike many warrior cultures, githyanki give as much respect to the secret warriors of the shadows as they do to front-line fighters, and see no dishonor in killing an unwary opponent. Assassination is an important tactic in githyanki military operations, including the invasion of Pharagos. Military commanders, heads of state, advisers, and spellcasters are favorite targets of githyanki assassins.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Blackguard

The greatest servants of the Lich-Queen are the githyanki knights, unholy warriors who hold the closest thing the githyanki have to a religious place in their godless society. These githyanki knights exclusively adopt the blackguard prestige class.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, except that a githyanki (or duthka'gith) can qualify for the blackguard prestige class with 2 ranks in Knowledge (the planes) instead of Knowledge (religion). In addition, however, he must be accepted by the Lich-Queen as a knight in her service. This qualification is entirely up to the Dungeon Master to adjudicate, but the Lich-Queen does not accept any githyanki into the knighthood who has ever disobeyed her orders or failed on a mission in her name.

Blackweave Warlock

The blackweave is the githyanki term for negative energy, which they view as an essential component of all matter. The blackweave warlock is an arcane spellcaster who specializes in harnessing this energy, unleashing its powerfully destructive force on the enemies of the githyanki. At the cost of progressing in her knowledge of other schools of magic, the blackweave warlock becomes a master of necromancy, to the point where her entire body becomes suffused with negative energy and her touch is as deadly as that of the undead.

Many blackweave warlocks are sorcerers, though a number of necromancer wizards also choose to focus on necromancy so extensively. Although blackweave warlocks are very combat-focused (like all githyanki warlocks), they

almost never multiclass except with this class, choosing instead to attain the maximum development of their spellcasting ability.

Blackweave warlocks are not the sort of necromancers who hide in cemeteries performing grotesque experiments on corpses or undead. Rather, they are respected and feared members of the githyanki armies, marching into battle in the name of the Lich-Queen. In the current invasion, blackweave warlocks are valued for small-scale operations including raids and missions of assassination or terror.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a blackweave warlock, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Alignment: Any evil.

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 9 ranks, Spellcraft 9 ranks.

Feats: Spell Focus (Necromancy).

Spellcasting: Able to cast *ray of exhaustion* and *vampiric touch*.

Special: In order to be accepted into the order of blackweave warlocks, a character must perform a sacrifice of a living, intelligent humanoid, using only magic to torture and then kill the victim.

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Class Skills

The blackweave warlock's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the blackweave warlock prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Blackweave warlocks gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Bonus Spells/Day: Similar to bonus spells for high ability scores, for each level of blackweave warlock that a spellcasting character attains, she gains bonus spells to the number of arcane spells per day she normally casts. These bonus spells can be added to whatever levels of spells the blackweave warlock can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's highest current spell level. In addition, the character can never have more daily spells of a certain level than of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in blackweave warlock. He can give himself one bonus 3rd-level spell (his highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in one other level: 0, 1st, or 2nd.

If a blackweave warlock has two arcane spellcasting classes already, she must choose which previous spellcasting class gains each bonus spell. For example, Geatroth is a 6th-level sorcerer/3rd-level wizard, with one level of blackweave warlock. Conceivably, Geatroth could have a bonus 2nd-level wizard spell and a bonus 3rd-level sorcerer spell, or he could put both bonus spells in either sorcerer or wizard, but then only one of them could be his maximum spell level. Bonus spells cannot be added to a divine spellcasting class.

Once a blackweave warlock has chosen how to apply a given bonus spell, it cannot be shifted.

Additional Spells Known: If she was previously a sorcerer or bard, a blackweave warlock gains additional spells known with each level of blackweave warlock she attains. These additional spells known can be of any levels of spells the blackweave warlock can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's current highest spell level. In addition, the character can never known more spells of a certain level than she does of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in blackweave warlock. He can learn one additional 3rd-level spell (his highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in any other level, 0 through 2nd.

Necromancer: A blackweave warlock adds her class level to any previous arcane spellcasting levels to determine her caster level for spells from the Necromancy school. For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level wizard/3rd-level blackweave warlock. When casting Necromancy spells, his caster level is 9th; for all other spells it is 6th.

Table 2–4: The Blackweave Warlock

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Bonus Spells/Day	Additional Spells Known
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Necromancer, Weapon Focus	2	2
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Death touch 1/day	2	2
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	New spell level	3	1
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Necromancer (+1)	2	2
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Death touch 2/day	2	2
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	New spell level	3	1
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Death ward	2	2
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	Death touch 3/day, necromancer (+2)	2	2
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	New spell level	3	1
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	Energy drain	2	2

For every 4 levels of blackweave warlock, the character's caster level for Necromancy spells increases by an additional +1. When Khosuvh reaches 4th level, his caster level increases to 10th for spells of the Necromancy school.

Weapon Focus: A blackweave warlock gains Weapon Focus as a bonus feat at 1st level. She can choose whether to apply the feat to rays or to touch spells.

Death Touch (Su): Starting at 2nd level, a blackweave warlock has the supernatural ability to slay living opponents with a single touch. She must succeed at a melee touch attack against the target. When she touches, she rolls 2d6 per warlock level. If the total at least equals the target's current hit points, it dies. This is a death effect.

A blackweave warlock can use this ability more often as she increases in levels, as shown on Table 2–4.

New Spell Level: When a blackweave warlock reaches 3rd level, and again when she reaches 6th level and 9th level, she gains the ability to cast spells of one level higher than she was previously able to cast. Initially, she can cast 0 spells of this level, but bonus spells (from a high ability score or her blackweave warlock bonus spells) can increase this number. She also initially knows 0 spells of this level (if she is a sorcerer or bard), so in order to cast any spells she must allocate her additional spell known to that level. For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level sorcerer/2nd-level blackweave warlock. When he reaches 3rd level as a blackweave warlock, he gains the ability to cast 4th-level sorcerer spells. He must allocate one of his bonus spells to 4th level in order to cast any 4th-level spells, unless his Charisma is high enough (18 or higher) to give him a bonus 4th-level spell. He also must allocate his additional spell known to 4th level so that he has one spell to cast.

Death Ward (Su): At 7th level, a blackweave warlock gains immunity to negative energy and death attacks, as if constantly protected by a *death ward* spell.

Energy Drain (Su): At 10th level, a blackweave warlock's touch drains life energy, just like the touch of certain undead creatures. Living creatures hit by the warlock's touch attack receive two negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove the negative level has a DC of 20 + the warlock's Charisma modifier. (If the blackweave warlock has Weapon Focus with touch spells, it applies to this energy-draining touch as well.)

Ghustil

Ghustils are healers who are adept at manipulating the energies of the Astral plane into healing power. Since natural healing is impossible on their native plane, those few githyanki who can master healing spells—bards, rangers, and the ghustil—are vitally important to their warrior culture. A ghustil's healing abilities pale in com-

Table 2–5: The Ghustil

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Spells Per Day 1	2	3	4	5	6
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	5	—	—	—	—	—
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	6	3	—	—	—	—
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	6	4	—	—	—	—
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	6	5	3	—	—	—
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	6	6	4	—	—	—
6	+4	+5	+5	+5	6	6	5	3	—	—
7	+5	+5	+5	+5	6	6	6	4	—	—
8	+6	+6	+6	+6	6	6	6	5	3	—
9	+6	+6	+6	+6	6	6	6	6	4	—
10	+7	+7	+7	+7	6	6	6	6	5	3

parison to the clerics of other races, but they are beyond the reach of any bard or ranger, so their talents are greatly appreciated.

Ghustils generally begin their careers as wizards or bards (or psions, if you are using the *Psionics Handbook*), or sometimes as sorcerers. Few other classes bring the knowledge of arcane matters required for the ghustil's discipline.

Although they are primarily spellcasters, ghustils are not considered warlocks since they do not use their spells as weapons. Rather, they are part of the hr'a'cknir caste, along with experts and other craftspeople. Even so, they serve a crucial function in any military action, particularly such a large-scale action as the invasion of Pharagos, and at least one ghustil is found with every military unit of any size.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a ghustil, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Skills: Heal 4 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus (Heal).

Spellcasting: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Class Skills

The ghustil's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the ghustil prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Ghustils gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spells Per Day/Spells Known: Beginning at 1st level, a ghustil gains the ability to cast a number of spells. These spells are neither arcane nor divine, but are powered by the energies of the Astral Plane. To cast a spell, the ghustil must be on a plane that connects to the Astral Plane. (In the D&D cosmology, all planes connect to the Astral Plane, but an alternate cosmology might have a more limited Astral Plane.) Ghustils do not receive bonus spells, and saving throws against those few spells on their spell list that allow saving throws (cure spells against undead) have a DC of 10 + spell level + the bonus for the minimum Wisdom required to cast the spell, or 10 + spell level times 1 1/2. The ghustil's spell list appears below. A ghustil casts spells just as a bard does, except that his spells are neither arcane nor divine. A ghustil's caster level is equal to his class level plus his caster level in one other spellcasting class.

Ghustil Spell List

Ghustils choose their spells known from the following very limited list. A 10th-level ghustil knows every spell on the list except for one of the two 6th-level spells.

Table 2–6: Ghustil Spells Known

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	3	—	—	—	—	—
2	3	1	—	—	—	—
3	4	2	—	—	—	—
4	4	2	1	—	—	—
5	5	3	2	—	—	—
6	5	3	2	1	—	—
7	5	4	3	2	—	—
8	5	4	3	2	1	—
9	5	5	4	3	2	—
10	5	5	4	3	2	1

1st—*bless, cure light wounds, deathwatch, remove fear, shield of faith*

2nd—*aid, cure moderate wounds, delay poison, lesser restoration, remove paralysis*

3rd—*cure serious wounds, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, remove disease*

4th—*cure critical wounds, mass cure light wounds, restoration*

5th—*mass cure moderate wounds, raise dead*

6th—*heal, mass cure serious wounds*

Gish Mindslayer

The githyanki have no greater enemy than the mind flayers who enslaved them for centuries when the race was born. Their entire culture, their very identity as a race, is built upon their hatred of the illithids, and among their greatest heroes are those who have distinguished themselves as illithid slayers. The gish mindslayer is dedicated to that mission, bringing both martial training and arcane mastery to the task of slaughtering mind flayers.

Gish mindslayers train in both a githwarrior class (often ranger, but sometimes fighter or even barbarian) and a warlock class (either wizard or sorcerer, almost never bard). Some also take rogue levels in order to benefit from a wide selection of skills and the ability to sneak attack.

Gish mindslayers often work alone or lead small groups to hunt and slay illithids. They have a strongly individualistic (they would say "self-reliant") streak, and do not excel in larger military operations.

The gish mindslayer is a nonpsionic version of the slayer prestige class detailed in the *Psionics Handbook*.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a gish mindslayer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Knowledge (underdark) 3 ranks, Survival 4 ranks.

Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (all), Track.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Special: Must have killed an illithid, either individually or as part of a group of no more than six.

Class Skills

The gish mindslayer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Knowledge (underdark) (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Table 2–7: The Gish Mindslayer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Favored enemy (illithid), illithid sense	—
2	+2	+0	+0	+3	Brain nausea	+1 level of existing class
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	Lucid buffer	—
5	+5	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
6	+6	+2	+2	+5	Cerebral blind	—
7	+7	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
8	+8	+2	+2	+6	Breach spell resistance	—
9	+9	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
10	+10	+3	+3	+7	Blast feedback	+1 level of existing class

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the gish mindslayer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Gish mindslayers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spellcasting: At 2nd level, and certain levels beyond 2nd, a gish mindslayer gains new spells per day and spells known as if he had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class level. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained, though he does retain the ability to exchange spells known with every even-numbered equivalent sorcerer or bard level. If the character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before becoming a gish mindslayer, the player must decide to which class to add each gish mindslayer level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Favored Enemy (Ex): A gish mindslayer has extensively studied illithids and their ways, and gains bonuses when fighting, tracking, or otherwise dealing with them. He gains a +2 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against mind flayers. Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus to weapon damage rolls against them.

If the mindslayer already had a favored enemy from another source (such as levels in the ranger class), his bonus against any one selected favored enemy (including illithids, if he desires) increases by +2. If aberrations are among his favored enemies, his bonuses against illithids stack with the bonuses he receives against all aberrations.

Illithid Sense (Su): A gish mindslayer senses the presence of illithids within 60 feet of himself, even if they are hidden by darkness, walls, or invisibility. He cannot determine their exact location, distance, or even direction, just the fact of their presence.

Brain Nausea (Su): A 2nd-level gish mindslayer has a constant supernatural defense against an illithid's most grisly attack. Any creature that attempts to eat the mindslayer's brain must succeed at a Will save (DC 17) or become disinclined to do so. Illithids in particular are free to take any action when affected by this ability, except actually extracting the mindslayer's brain to eat it. This ability is active as long as the mindslayer is alive, even if he is unconscious, stunned, or otherwise helpless.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, a gish mindslayer gains a bonus metamagic or fighter feat.

Lucid Buffer (Su): At 4th level, a gish mindslayer becomes especially skilled at resisting mental attacks. He receives a +4 competence bonus on saving throws against all compulsions and mind-affecting effects. He also receives a +2 competence bonus on saving throws against psionic attacks such as an illithid's *mind blast* attack.

Cerebral Blind (Sp): On reaching 6th level, a gish mindslayer can "riposte" a mental attack. Whenever he succeeds at a saving throw against a compulsion, other mind-affecting effect, or psionic attack, the attacker must immediately make a Will save against the DC of the original attack. On a failure, the attacker is dazed for 1 round from the mental backlash.

Breach Spell Resistance (Su): Upon reaching 8th level, a gish mindslayer has the ability to enhance any weapon he wields so that it erodes the spell resistance of any creature it strikes. Each successful attack he makes against a creature with spell resistance temporarily reduces the creature's SR by 1. If the creature survives, lost spell resistance returns at a rate of 1 point per 12 hours.

Blast Feedback (Su): A 10th-level gish mindslayer is able to turn an illithid's most dangerous attack back upon it. Whenever he is in the area of a *mind blast*, he can forego his saving throw in order to channel the blast energy back at the illithid producing it. Rather than being stunned, he takes 3d4 points of temporary Charisma damage. The illithid must then make its own Will save against the DC of its *mind blast*. If it fails, it is stunned for 1 round and cannot use another *mind blast* for 3d4 rounds.

Holocaust Warrior

Some attribute it to their ancient pact with red dragons, while others just chalk it up to pyromania, but certain githyanki gish are particularly adept with the magic of fire. The holocaust warrior is the perfect example: a gish who hurls fireballs between swings of his flaming greatsword. In the martial philosophy of the githyanki, fire is a symbol of the consuming power of the githyanki race, which will soon destroy all other races and burn triumphantly through eternity.

Holocaust warriors are always gish, learning both martial skills and spells, focusing on evocation and fire magic. Many holocaust warriors are fighter/sorcerers, while many others are fighter/wizards. A few barbarian/sorcerers become holocaust warriors, but most holocaust warriors are highly disciplined and well-trained fighters, not rampaging berserkers. Gish with other martial classes rarely become holocaust warriors.

In githyanki military units, holocaust warriors are found with the other gish—marching in their own units to fight with flaming sword and fiery spell as the need arises. Holocaust warriors often lead units of other gish, simply by virtue of their high level.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a holocaust warrior, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Base Save Bonuses: Fort +4, Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 6 ranks.

Table 2–8: The Holocaust Warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Bonus Spells/Day	Additional Spells Known
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Incinerator, improved combat casting	2	2
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Flaming weapon (1/day), armored casting	2	2
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	New spell level	3	1
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Fire resistance 10	2	2
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	Flaming weapon (2/day, burst)	2	2
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	New spell level	3	1
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	Fire immunity	2	2
8	+6	+6	+2	+6	Flaming weapon (3/day)	2	2
9	+6	+6	+3	+6	New spell level	3	1
10	+7	+7	+3	+7	Burn	2	2

Feats: Combat Casting, Martial Weapon Proficiency (all), Spell Focus (Evocation).

Spellcasting: Able to cast *fireball*.

Special: Must be reduced below 0 hit points by fire and then revived, usually in a ritual of initiation (but sometimes on the battlefield).

Class Skills

The holocaust warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the holocaust warrior prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Holocaust warriors gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Bonus Spells/Day: Similar to bonus spells for high ability scores, for each level of holocaust warrior that a spellcasting character attains, he gains bonus spells to the number of arcane spells per day he normally casts. These bonus spells can be added to whatever levels of spells the holocaust warrior can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's highest current spell level. In addition, the character can never have more daily spells of a certain level than of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Tharanh is a 4th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in holocaust warrior. She can give herself one bonus 3rd-level spell (her highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in any other level, 0 through 2nd.

If a holocaust warrior has two arcane spellcasting classes already, he must choose which previous spellcasting class gains each bonus spell. For example, Hostiath is a 5th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer/5th-level wizard, with one level of holocaust warrior. Conceivably, Hostiath could have a bonus 3rd-level wizard spell and a bonus 3rd-level sorcerer spell, or he could put both bonus spells in either sorcerer or wizard, but then only one of them could be 3rd level. Bonus spells cannot be added to a divine spellcasting class.

One a holocaust warrior has chosen how to apply a given bonus spell, it cannot be shifted.

Additional Spells Known: If he was previously a sorcerer or bard, a holocaust warrior gains additional spells known with each level of holocaust warrior he attains. These additional spells known can be of any levels of spells the holocaust warrior can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's current highest spell level. In addition, the character can never known more spells of a certain level than he does of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Tharanh is a 4th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in holocaust warrior. She can learn one additional 3rd-level

spell (her highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in any other level, 0 through 2nd.

Incinerator: A holocaust warrior uses his character level as his caster level for all fire spells. For example, Tharanh is a 4th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer/3rd-level holocaust warrior. When casting fire spells, her caster level is 13th; for all other spells it is 6th.

Improved Combat Casting (Ex): If a holocaust warrior fails a Concentration check to cast a spell defensively, he can choose either to lose the spell (as normal) or to cast it anyway, provoking an attack of opportunity as normal. In addition, he gains a +4 dodge bonus to his AC against any attack of opportunity he provokes by casting a spell.

Flaming Weapon (Su): At 2nd level, a holocaust warrior gains the ability to wreathe a melee weapon in flames once per day, as a free action. The flames last for 1 round per character level, and deal an extra 1d6 points of fire damage whenever the weapon successfully hits. The holocaust warrior can apply this ability to melee or ranged weapons; projectile weapons transfer the *flaming* quality to their ammunition.

At 5th level, the holocaust warrior can use this ability twice per day. In addition, the weapon becomes a *flaming burst* weapon, dealing 1d6 points of bonus fire damage on a normal hit, or 1d10 points on a successful critical hit. At 8th level, the character can use this ability three times per day.

Armored Casting (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, a holocaust warrior reduces the arcane spell failure chance for casting spells in armor by 10%.

New Spell Level: When a holocaust warrior reaches 3rd level, and again when he reaches 6th level and 9th level, he gains the ability to cast spells of one level higher than he was previously able to cast. Initially, he can cast 0 spells of this level, but bonus spells (from a high ability score or his holocaust warrior bonus spells) can increase this number. He also initially knows 0 spells of this level (if he is a sorcerer or bard), so in order to cast any spells he must allocate his additional spell known to that level. For example, Tharanh is a 10th-level sorcerer/2nd-level holocaust warrior. When she reaches 3rd level as a holocaust warrior, she gains the ability to cast 6th-level sorcerer spells. She must allocate one of her bonus spells to 6th level in order to cast any 6th-level spells, unless her Charisma is high enough (22 or higher) to give her a bonus 6th-level spell. She also must allocate her additional spell known to 6th level so that she has one spell to cast.

Fire Resistance/Immunity (Ex): At 4th level, a holocaust warrior gains fire resistance 10. He ignores the first 10 points of fire damage dealt by each attack. At 7th level, a holocaust warrior becomes immune to fire altogether.

Burn (Su): When he reaches 10th level, a holocaust warrior turns every weapon he wields into a *flaming* weapon (and he can still use his *flaming* weapon three times per day to make a weapon a *flaming burst* weapon). Any creature hit by his weapon attack also must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 20 + the holocaust warrior's Constitution modifier) or catch fire. The flame burns for 1d4 rounds (see Catching on Fire in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). A burning creature can take a move-equivalent action to put out the flame.

Creatures hitting a holocaust warrior with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take 1d6 points of fire damage as though hit by his attack, and also catch fire unless they succeed at a Reflex save.

Sword Stalker

Sword stalkers are trained specialists with only one purpose: recovering *silver swords* lost by other githyanki and hunting down the fools who take them. Able to hunt such thieves even across planar boundaries, sword stalkers are the superlative trackers and scouts of the githyanki race.

Most sword stalkers are gish (multiclass fighter/wizards or ranger/wizards), since their diversity of skills makes them best suited for the dangerous missions they undertake. Ranger/wizards are well suited to the role, building on their existing tracking ability to become masterful planar stalkers. Fighter/wizards and occasionally barbarian/wizards also become sword stalkers. For some reason, sorcerers are not typically drawn to the class, though there are certainly exceptions.

Unlike most gish, sword stalkers tend to operate with a high degree of independence, and often have no formal connection to the armies of the Lich-Queen. Often a single sword stalker leads a small band of adventurous githwar-

Table 2–9: The Sword Stalker

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+2	Improved Alertness, locate object
2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Smite swordthief (1/day)
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Astral tracking
4	+4	+4	+4	+4	Smite swordthief (2/day)
5	+5	+4	+4	+4	*Scry sword*
6	+6	+5	+5	+5	Smite swordthief (3/day)
7	+7	+5	+5	+5	
8	+8	+6	+6	+6	Smite swordthief (4/day)
9	+9	+6	+6	+6	
10	+10	+7	+7	+7	*Discern location*, smite swordthief (5/day)

riors, warlocks, and gish on a hunt; much more rarely, a troupe of sword stalkers works together to find a very important *silver sword*.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a sword stalker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Skills: Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks, Survival 7 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Track.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

Special: Must have recovered a *silver sword* from a non-githyanki.

Class Skills

The sword stalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the sword stalker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Sword stalkers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Improved Alertness (Ex): A sword stalker gains an additional +2 bonus on Listen and Spot checks, which stacks with the bonus from the Alertness feat.

Locate Object (Sp): A sword stalker can use *locate object* at will, but can only use it to locate a *silver sword*. Her effective caster level is her class level +2.

Smite Swordthief (Su): Once per day, a sword stalker of at least 2nd level can smite an opponent who has stolen a *silver sword*. The sword stalker gains a +4 bonus on her attack roll and adds her class level to her damage roll. If the sword stalker accidentally smites someone who has never stolen a *silver sword*, the smite has no effect, but it is still used up for that day.

For every 2 levels the sword stalker attains beyond 1st, she can smite a swordthief one additional time per day.

Astral Tracking (Su): A 3rd-level sword stalker can attempt to track normally even through the featureless wastes of the Astral Plane (base DC 25). In addition, when standing at the location (on any plane) where someone departed by means of a *teleportation* spell, the sword stalker can attempt to determine the destination of the spell. This requires a Survival check against a DC of 30; if successful, the sword stalker can *dimension door* to the same location, if it is within range.

Scry Sword (Sp): A 5th-level sword stalker can *scry* as a spell-like ability at will. This ability works like the *greater scrying* spell, except that the sword stalker can only target a *silver sword*, not a creature. If the *silver sword* is in a creature's possession, the creature makes a saving throw as normal, but automatically suffers a –4 penalty on the save because of the sword stalker's connection to one of the creature's possessions.

Discern Location (Sp): At 10th level, a sword stalker gains the ability to use *discern location* as a spell-like ability, three times per day, as a 16th-level sorcerer. This ability only works to locate a *silver sword*.

VINOD RAMS

Feats

The following feats are unique to the githyanki. At the Dungeon Master's discretion, characters of other races and kinds who qualify for these feats might be allowed to take them, but with only a single exception (Improved Spell Resistance) these feats represent the special training given to githwarriors, warlocks, and gish in the service of the Lich-Queen.

Double Blade Whirlwind [General]

You can use a double-bladed weapon in a raging flurry of blows.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus (any two-bladed weapon), Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: When you use the full attack action while wielding a two-bladed weapon (any double weapon with two slashing ends, including the two-bladed sword, orc double axe, double crescent blade, githyanki double scythe, githyanki scythe-sword, and githyanki double scimitar) with which you have the Weapon Focus feat, you may make one extra attack in a round at your highest base attack, but this attack and each other attack made that round suffer a –2 penalty apiece. This penalty applies for 1 round, so it affects attacks of opportunity you might make before your next action. You may choose which end of the weapon you use to make the extra attack.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Greater Combat Reflexes [General]

You react to any drop in your opponents' guard with blinding speed.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Improved Combat Reflexes, Dex 15, base attack bonus +11.

Benefit: For any given opportunity in melee combat, you can make two attacks of opportunity. The second attack is at a –5 penalty, just like your second normal attack in any given round. You still cannot exceed your normal maximum number of attacks of opportunity in a round.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Greater Disarm [General]

You can follow through on a disarm to strike your disarmed opponent.

Prerequisites: Int 13, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm.

Benefit: If you successfully disarm an opponent in melee combat, you immediately get a melee attack against that opponent as if you hadn't used your attack for the disarm action. For example, at 11th level, the githwarrior Gharvag gets three attacks at base attack bonuses of +11, +6, and +1. In the current round, he attempts to disarm his opponent. His first attempt fails (using his first attack). His second attack successfully disarms the foe, and he immediately makes a melee attack against his

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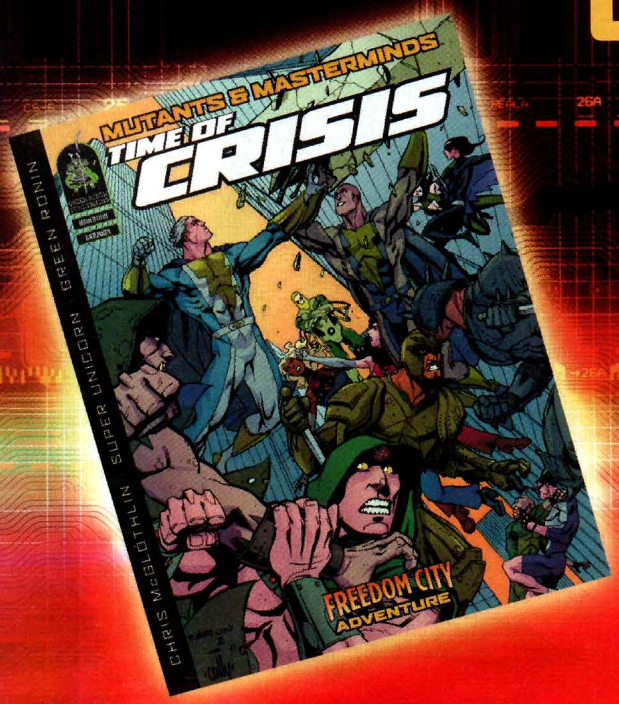

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opponent with a base attack of +6. Finally, he takes his last attack at +1.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Greater Psionic Teleportation [General]

You have greatly honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *dimension door* ability, Psionic Teleportation, character level 12.

Benefit: You can use *greater teleport* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *teleport* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Greater Sunder [General]

You can follow through on a sunder attack to smite the weapon's wielder.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, Improved Sunder.

Benefit: If you destroy an opponent's weapon with the sunder action in melee combat, you immediately get a melee attack against that opponent as if you hadn't used your attack for the sunder action. For example, at 11th level, the githwarrior Gharvag gets three attacks at base attack bonuses of +11, +6, and +1. In the current round, he attempts to sunder his opponent's weapon. His first attempt hits the weapon but does not destroy it. His second attack finishes off the weapon, and he immediately makes a melee attack against his opponent with a base attack of +6. Finally, he takes his last attack at +1.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Improved Combat Casting [General]

You have mastered the art of casting spells in combat.

Prerequisite: Combat Casting, Concentration 7 ranks.

Benefit: If you fail your Concentration check to cast on the defensive, you do not lose the spell you were attempting to cast. You can choose either to abort your casting attempt and retain the spell, or to cast anyway, provoking an attack of opportunity as though you had not attempted to cast defensively.

Normal: If you fail an attempt to cast on the defensive, you lose the spell.

Improved Combat Reflexes [General]

You react to any drop in your opponents' guard with lightning speed.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Dex 13, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: For any given opportunity in melee combat, you can make two attacks of opportunity. The second attack is at a –5 penalty, just like your second normal attack in any given round. You still cannot exceed your normal maximum number of attacks of opportunity in a round.

Improved Spell Resistance [General]

You are particularly resistant to magic.

Prerequisite: Spell resistance.

Benefit: Your spell resistance increases by +2.

Nightmare Steed [General]

You have a nightmare companion that you can ride into battle.

Prerequisite: Fiendish servant class ability.

Benefit: You can replace your fiendish servant with a nightmare, as described in the *Monster Manual*. The nightmare gains the same improvement to its Hit Dice, Strength, and other abilities that your fiendish servant would have gained, based on your level. If your nightmare dies, you can replace it in the same way that you would replace another fiendish servant.

Psionic Displacement [General]

You have honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *blur* ability, character level 5.

Benefit: You can use *displacement* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *blur* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Psionic Invisibility [General]

You have greatly honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *blur* ability, Psionic Displacement, character level 9.

Benefit: You can use *greater invisibility* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *displacement* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Psionic Teleportation [General]

You have honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *dimension door* ability, character level 9.

Benefit: You can use *teleport* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *dimension door* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Silver Cord Strike [General]

You specialize in severing the silver cords of astral travelers.

Prerequisites: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Power Attack.

Benefit: When you strike at an astral traveler's silver cord, you do not provoke an attack of opportunity. You also gain a +4 bonus to any attack roll made to attack a creature's silver cord.

Normal: A character who doesn't have this feat incurs an attack of opportunity when he strikes at a creature's silver cord.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Spell on the Run [General]

You are trained in using spells in the rush of melee while remaining light on your feet.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4 or higher, Spring Attack.

Benefit: When casting a spell with a casting time of 1 standard action or less, you can move both before and after casting the spell, provided that your total distance moved is not greater than your speed. You can't use this feat if you are in heavy armor.

You must move at least 5 feet both before and after you cast your spell in order to utilize the benefits of Spell on the Run.

Sweeping Blade Mastery [Martial Arts Style]

You have mastered the githyanki combat style known as Sweeping Blade, emphasizing grand motions and intricate flourishes of a long-bladed weapon.

This is not a feat, but a martial arts style. Any githyanki character who has learned all the prerequisite feats of this style gains the benefit of the style without spending an additional feat slot.

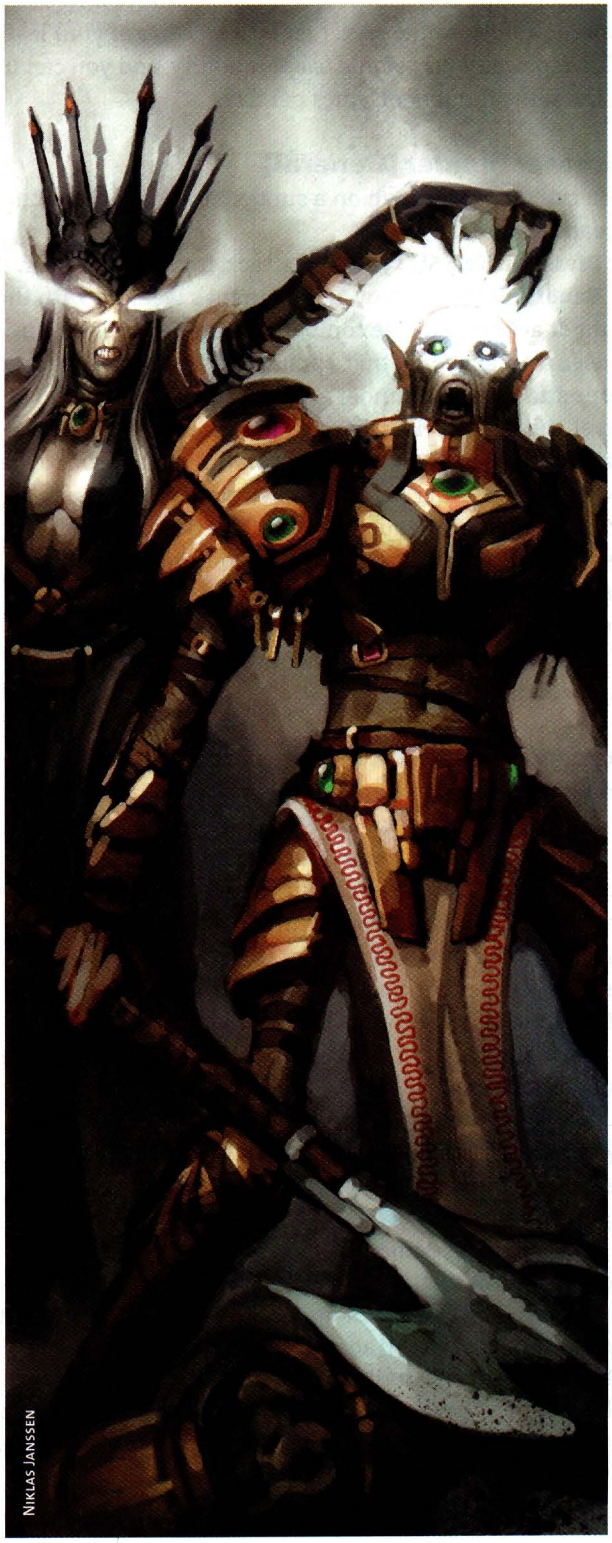
Prerequisites: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Focus (any slashing weapon), Balance 4 ranks.

Benefit: You can use a slashing weapon that you have Weapon Focus in to deflect ranged attacks as though you had the Deflect Arrows feat. Unlike the normal use of that feat, you need not have a hand free; rather, you must be holding your blade. You cannot use this ability when wielding a light weapon, a weapon that is not a slashing weapon, or a simple weapon of any kind.

The Great Reward

The Lich-Queen Vlaakith devours the soul of any githyanki who reaches 17th level. In an arcane ritual, she incorporates the slain githyanki's life essence into her own, increasing her own power and longevity while simultaneously obliterating a potential rival to her position of absolute authority over the entire race. The power she gains from this practice has undoubtedly contributed to making her the greatest ruler the githyanki race has ever known, but the true secret to her success is that she has convinced her people to desire this fate. A githwarrior, warlock, or gish longs for nothing more, and hopes for no greater reward, than to earn sweet oblivion as part of the Lich-Queen's essence. Other castes are not exempt from this reward, but few mlar reach 17th level as nonadventuring NPCs.

A githyanki who flees this fate earns the undying enmity of a very powerful foe, a wizard and a lich of no less than 25th level, with literal armies at her command. Vlaakith usually sends a party of four 16th-level knights and warlocks in search of any githyanki who flees her final embrace, armed with the best gear possible (equipped as PCs, not NPCs) and mounted, if traveling to a plane other than the Astral Plane, on mature adult fiendish red dragons. These hunters have orders to kill the fugitive first, then capture his essence by means of a scroll of *soul bind* that Vlaakith provides for them (since no githyanki can cast that 9th-level spell). This is viewed as fitting punishment, denying the renegade the pleasure of Vlaakith draining his soul while still providing her the life essence she craves.



Niklas Janssen

Chapter 3: Culture and Gear

The githyanki have an ancient civilization, their history stretching back past the beginning of most worlds' records. Dwelling in the timeless Astral Plane and united over the millennia by the rule of a mere handful of Lich-Queen rulers, githyanki culture remains true to its ancient roots and has changed only very slowly over the eons. Now as at their founding, the githyanki are a race defined by their hatreds—their shared loathing of the illithids and the githzerai—and structured as an army ready at any instant to strike out against their enemies.

Attila Adorjany

Social Order and Disorder

The githyanki are uniformly evil, but individuals are as often lawful as chaotic evil. Their society is probably best described as neutral evil, with a militaristic regimentation balanced by a strong ethic of individual freedom and personal achievement, focused above all toward ends of hatred and death.

As a result of their racial origin as slaves of the mind flayers, githyanki place an extremely high value on freedom. More lawfully-inclined githyanki emphasize the freedom of the githyanki as a race, swearing that the race shall never again be subjugated to other powers while also stressing the need for individual githyanki to forfeit at least some of their own personal freedom for the greater benefit of the race. Githyanki who lean more toward chaos argue that personal enslavement to the githyanki race as a whole is little better than servitude to the mind flayers, and stress every individual githyanki's right to live free of oppressive regulation. Most githyanki live content in a middle ground between the two extremes, finding their own balance between subservience to their race and personal freedom.

Regardless of alignment, all githyanki share a personal abhorrence of the concept of slavery or captivity. Few githyanki would ever consider surrender as an option in a losing fight, vastly preferring death to the possibility of enslavement or imprisonment. As if the fear of enslavement weren't enough, failure on a mission is considered a capital crime, barely short of betraying the Lich-Queen, so surrender is equivalent to death in any case. Githyanki are happy to fight to the death. Conversely, they frequently take captives in battle, and sometimes use prisoners of war as slave laborers, but they do not enslave others on a permanent basis.

Closely related to this hatred of servitude is the strong githyanki sense of individuality. Each githyanki strives to create her own unique style, expressed through the ornamentation of her armor and weapons, the style of her hair and the adornment she wears, and even in her particular combat maneuvers. What appears to be a regimented line of githwarriors marching toward an enemy force breaks into something like uncontrolled chaos when it meets the enemy, with each warrior expressing his individuality through his own combat maneuvers, steps, flourishes of his blade, and battle cries. This sense of individual uniqueness is somewhat muted among lawful githyanki, but it never vanishes even among those most committed to law and order.

Similarly, githyanki are committed to a set of individual freedoms which, though not codified in anything like a Bill of Rights, are valued by all githyanki regardless of alignment. A githyanki believes he is free to speak his mind no matter how unsettling his opinion might be, although most githyanki avoid taboo subjects such as religion or rebellion because they are considered socially unacceptable. Githyanki believe they are free to do as they please within the privacy of their homes, and would be shocked at any intrusion upon that privacy. Further, even the military regime of the githyanki allows soldiers and ordinary citizens alike to travel as they please without giving an account of their comings and goings.

At the other end of the scale, the lawful nature of githyanki society is most clearly manifested in the autocratic rule of the Lich-Queen and the governors (often called Supreme Leaders) who oversee each city and outpost in her name. Although not given to creating extensive and elaborate codes of laws, these rulers hold absolute power over the communities they govern. Githyanki respect authority, particularly when it takes the form of a 25th-level lich wizard or a high-level knight who carries the Lich-Queen's personal seal. Disobeying a knight amounts to treason against the Lich-Queen, one of many capital crimes. In the absence of lengthy legal codes, githyanki settlements adopt a set of Articles that simply and clearly spell out forbidden activities. These usually include prohibitions against harming or killing githyanki, stealing from githyanki, capturing a githyanki or forcing one into servitude, and similar common-sense sorts of rules. Without exception, however, these rules only apply when the victim is a githyanki. Even in a cosmopolitan place like the city of Githmir, where small numbers of evil humans, fiends, and other races live in ghettoes, githyanki rules prohibit no act committed against nongithyanki. A githyanki—or another human—can slay a human in a githyanki city with no reason or provocation and need not fear punishment from the githyanki. These ghettoes, however, have their own codes of law. While ghetto residents have no jurisdiction over githyanki, they can and do punish their own citizens for crimes against each other.

Githyanki are also sharply divided into castes that are based on an individuals' function within githyanki society. These castes are not hereditary nor do they severely limit what their members can do. No law or social stigma prevents a githwarrior, for example, from associating with a hr'a'cknir commoner. For practical reasons, however, members of any caste usually associate primarily with others of their own caste. Since there are no githyanki families, the child of a hr'a'cknir can easily grow to become a knight if his ability and skill prove great enough. Also, the castes are not arranged in any hierarchy: warlocks and mlar are equally valued for their different contributions to githyanki society. To an extent, the castes correspond with character classes, but (as described in Chapter Two) the correlation is hardly exact.

Githwarriors

Those githyanki who serve the Lich-Queen by wielding weapons in her armies are known as githwarriors. The ranks of the githwarriors include many fighters and warriors, but also barbarians, monks, rangers, and rogues, as well as characters who multiclass within the githwarrior classes, such as fighter/rogues.

Gradations within the githwarrior caste correspond to military ranks in the Lich-Queen's armies. Accomplished githwarriors can aspire to the rank of sarth, or "sergeant," and gain command over a small unit of soldiers. A sarth is usually at least 6th level and spends a feat slot on Leadership as part of his promotion. A typical sarth commands a squad of 4 to 6 lower-level githwarriors. As a sarth, a githwarrior can be promoted further to the rank of kith'rak, or "captain," and assume command over several squads with their sarths. A kith'rak is usually at least 12th level.

Githwarriors usually wear medium to heavy armor in the baroque styles unique to the githyanki. Common soldiers usually wear beaded armor (detailed under Armor, below), while sarths wear breastplates, splint mail, or banded mail. Kith'raks wear half-plate or full plate. All githwarriors favor large-bladed weapons, including greatswords, bastard swords, longswords, scimitars, halberds, glaives, scythes, and various double-bladed versions of these weapons. They typically carry crossbows for ranged attacks.

Knights

The githyanki knights are the most respected and feared members of githyanki society. Combining martial prowess with a mastery of unholy power unknown among any other githyanki, knights are the loyal servants of the Lich-Queen, acting as her eyes, ears, and swords. Every githyanki city, fortress, and outpost is governed by a knight who usually reports directly to the Lich-Queen. Every mission of importance on any plane is led by a knight. They are the objects of reverence, fear, and awe, as the concrete manifestations of the Lich-Queen's will everywhere the githyanki exist. For all that, however, they are not truly a caste of their own; rather, they are the highest echelon of the githwarriors.

Every githyanki knight is a blackguard; among the githyanki the terms are synonymous. A githyanki cannot become a blackguard unless he has proven himself worthy of serving the Lich-Queen, and no githwarrior can become a knight unless he qualifies for the blackguard prestige class.

A knight's badge of office is his *silver sword*, granted by the Lich-Queen to every knight upon his admission to the order. Knights almost always wear full plate armor, and sometimes ride nightmares, fiendish horses, or fiendish red dragons into battle.

Warlocks

Warlocks serve the armies of the Lich-Queen through spellcasting, and include both sorcerers and wizards (as

well as psions, if you use psionics in your game). Most warlocks are simply warriors who wield magic instead of weapons, focusing their studies on damaging evocations and conjurations such as *magic missile*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *ice storm*. Some warlocks focus on necromantic spells, and the most dedicated of these adopt the blackweave warlock prestige class described in Chapter Two.

Githyanki armies do not usually contain entire units of warlocks. Instead, a low-level warlock (1st to 6th level) is typically attached to each squad as sort of an adjunct member of the squad. The warlock is roughly equal in status to the sarth of the unit—not under the sarth's command, nor able to command the sarth (or, indeed, any of the githwarriors). A warlock who hopes to survive and advance cooperates with the sarth of his unit (and vice versa), but it is a relationship of equals and not of command. Those warlocks who can demonstrate mastery of 4th-level spells and show talents for leadership (by means of the Leadership feat) gain the rank and title of kajorr, or "master." A kajorr is a commander of lower-level warlocks, using magic to communicate with warlocks in different units spread across the field of battle. A kajorr commands 4 to 6 lesser warlocks and cooperates closely with a githwarrior kith'rak. A kajorr who demonstrates mastery of 7th-level spells is named a tlai'kajorr, or "grand master," and coordinates the operations of several kajorrs.

As arcane spellcasters, warlocks usually forgo the ornate armor of their githwarrior counterparts. A very few warlocks don light armor and wade into melee casting touch spells on their opponents, but this role falls more frequently to the gish. Most warlocks dress in comfortable, loose clothing, favoring bright colors and elaborate embroidered decoration. The standard garb of a warlock is a long strip of white or black linen wound tightly around the torso, a pair of loose, patterned breeches drawn tight below the knee, and a loose, solid-colored outer jacket with elbow-length sleeves. Arcane symbols representing fire, acid, cold, negative energy, and other eldritch forces are common ornaments stitched onto the back or sleeves of a warlock's jacket, while symbols of protection are painted all along the linen strip worn beneath the outer clothing. (Sometimes these sigils have actual protective value; see the sidebar.) Warlocks are frequently equipped with wands and staffs, but generally carry no weapons other than an ornate dagger.

Wrappings of Armor

A popular substitute for *bracers of armor* among the githyanki, *wrappings of armor* is a magic linen wrapping that forms an undergarment for githyanki warlocks. The protective sigils painted on the wrappings provide an armor bonus to AC, just like the magic bracers do. A character wearing *wrappings of armor* cannot also benefit from a magic vest, vestment, or shirt.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, mage armor, creator's class level must be twice that of the bonus placed in the wrappings; Price 1,000 gp (+1), 4,000 gp (+2), 9,000 gp (+3), 16,000 gp (+4), 25,000 gp (+5), 36,000 gp (+6), 49,000 gp (+7), or 64,000 gp (+8); Weight 1 lb.

Gish

The caste system of the githyanki recognizes that many githyanki do not fit easily into the githwarrior or warlock caste. The gish ("skilled") caste includes those soldiers of the Lich-Queen who are accomplished in combat both with weapons and with spells. These multitalented githyanki include multiclass characters with one githwarrior class and one warlock class, such as fighter/wizards and barbarian/sorcerers. In addition, single-class bards (and psychic warriors) are members of the gish caste, since their class abilities include both the skills of a warrior and the spells of a warlock. The gish caste was actually the last caste to develop, appearing a few centuries after the birth of the githyanki race.

Gish generally serve in the same units as githwarriors. Like githwarriors, they can hope to be promoted to command such units based on their skill in battle and spells. A gish who serves as a sarth of a unit carries the formal title gish'sarath, although members of the unit would still speak of "my sarth." A gish'sarath is generally at least 6th level—usually balanced between martial and arcane classes (such as a 3rd-level fighter/3rd-level wizard) or a 6th level bard. Similarly, a gish who serves as a captain carries the formal title of gish'kith'arak. A gish'kith'arak is usually at least 12th level.

Some gish forgo armor like their warlock counterparts, while others (particularly bards) wear light armor. Multiclass gish sometimes wear armor as well. In fact, some gish units consist of multiclass characters with only one level or so of an arcane spellcasting class, heavily armored and bearing wands and similar spell trigger devices into battle. As a mark of his caste, every gish wears at least some piece of armor, if only a pair of ornate greaves or vambraces too small to offer actual protection. An otherwise unarmored gish dresses like a warlock, while a gish in armor is distinguished from a githwarrior only by the linen wrappings he wears under his armor, which are not immediately visible to the casual observer.

Armored or not, gish carry a full complement of weapons, favoring the same bladed weapons as githwarriors. They generally rely on spells rather than crossbows for ranged attacks, and many enjoy using touch spells in melee rather than, or in addition to, weapons. They are often equipped with magic weapons, including *spell storing* weapons, and other magic items useful in melee combat.

Mlar

Mlars are a unique variety of magical artisan and crafter. Most mlars focus on the construction and repair of buildings, tools, weapons, and other necessities, while a few

Table 3–1: The Mlar

NPC Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Spells Per Day						
					0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	3	0	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	3	2	0	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	3	3	1	—	—	—	—
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	3	3	2	—	—	—	—
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	3	3	2	0	—	—	—
8th	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	3	3	3	1	—	—	—
9th	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	3	3	3	2	—	—	—
10th	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	3	3	3	2	0	—	—
11th	+8/+3	+3	+3	+7	3	3	3	3	1	—	—
12th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	3	3	3	3	2	—	—
13th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	3	3	3	3	2	0	—
14th	+10/+5	+4	+4	+9	4	3	3	3	3	1	—
15th	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+9	4	4	3	3	3	2	—
16th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	4	4	4	3	3	2	0

use their powers to create sculpture and other objects of art. Mlars are not a part of the Lich-Queen's armies, and they are essentially NPC noncombatants. They are nevertheless an important and valued caste within githyanki society. There are no formal ranks within the mlar caste, though of course a 20th-level master crafter has more authority and commands more respect than a 1st-level apprentice.

Mlar is an NPC class, similar to the adept described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but with an extremely limited spell list.

Hit Die: d6.

Class Skills

The mlar's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the mlar NPC class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Mlars are skilled with all simple weapons. Mlars are not proficient with any type of armor nor with shields.

Spells: A mlar casts arcane spells. She is limited to a certain number of spells of each spell level per day, according to her class level. Like a sorcerer, a mlar casts spells from a very limited lists of spells she knows, and need not prepare her spells ahead of time.

The DC for a saving throw against a mlar's spell is 10 + spell level + the mlar's Intelligence modifier.

When the mlar gets 0 spells of a given level (see Table 3–1: The Mlar), she gets only bonus spells for that spell slot. A mlar without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. Bonus spells are based on Intelligence.

Starting Gear

2d4 × 10 gp worth of equipment. Mlars dress in loose, ankle-length pants, often brightly colored, and equally colorful (not always coordinating) loose-fitting shirts. They typically carry maces or daggers for self-defense.

Mlar Spell List

Mlars know the spells on the following list and no others:

0 level—*mending*, *prestidigitation* (used only to change the color or objects or to create decoration)

1st level—*magic weapon*

2nd level—*make whole*

3rd level—*stone shape*

4th level—*minor creation*

5th level—*fabricate*

6th level—*major creation*

Hr'a'cknir

The members of the hr'a'cknir caste are the experts of githyanki society. Dwelling on the Astral Plane, however, these experts are, by and large, not the mundane artisans and professionals of most Material-Plane societies. Rather, the hr'a'cknir are skilled at the manipulation, through minor magical and psionic means, of the energies of the Astral Plane itself.

Hr'a'cknirs include the ghustils, githyanki who can manipulate astral energy to heal. (Ghustil is a prestige class described in Chapter 2.) Other hr'a'cknir are the senja'si, seers who are said to be able to predict the future and view the present and past. They are sorcerers or specialist diviner wizards, not considered part of the warlock caste because their spell selection makes them useless in combat. Varsh are caretakers that rear the

young of a community, supervising both their time on the Astral Plane and their "growing years" on the Material Plane or some other plane on which time passes normally. Experts and commoners fill out the ranks of the hr'a'cknir caste, though neither of these NPC classes is as common as it is among humans and other Material-Plane humanoids. Aristocrats and adepts are unknown among the githyanki.

Hr'a'cknirs wear colorful, patterned tunics that cover them from shoulder to knee. Like mlars, they carry simple weapons for self-defense.

The Great Taboo: Religion and the Githyanki

The Lich-Queen Vlaakith is the sole recipient of her subjects' devotion, the closest thing the githyanki have to a deity. Her jealousy drives her to exterminate any githyanki who worships anything but her, be it deity or impersonal principle. This is all true, as far as it goes, but to say that religion simply does not exist among the githyanki is overly simplistic.

That said, there are a scant handful of githyanki who offer very secretive devotion to one or more deities, hoping to win some god's favor upon the githyanki race and ensure their victory on their crusade of conquest. Some even flee the reach of the Lich-Queen seeking the freedom to worship a deity of their choice. Among these githyanki, Hextor, Erythnul, Nerull, Vecna, and the dragon goddess Tiamat are the most common objects of devotion, or even Boccob or Wee Jas among more neutral-leaning outcasts. (In the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*, githyanki are drawn to the worship of Bane, Cyric, Gargauth, Loviatar, Shar, Talona, Talos, and Velsharoon, as well as Tiamat, in addition to Azuth, Hoar, Kossuth, Savras, and Tempus among neutral renegades.)

Of course, githyanki who have a religious bent never discuss it, and the possibility of this phenomenon occurring among the people of the Lich-Queen is utterly unspeakable. When closeted believers are caught, they are killed without explanation or trial. When discussing the culture of nongithyanki, githyanki avoid the topic of religion if at all possible, refuse to name any deities, and treat the subject, if it cannot be avoided, hastily and awkwardly, trying hard to ensure that they sound not the least bit interested or sympathetic.

One form of religious sentiment that is almost acceptable among the githyanki, though they themselves would rarely describe it as religion at all, is a sort of messianic expectation. After meeting with Tiamat in the Nine Hells, the hero-liberator Gith disappeared—perhaps remaining in the Hells with Tiamat as some kind of payment for the pact she made with the goddess's red dragon consort, perhaps elsewhere on some timeless plane. Many githyanki believe that Gith will return to lead her people once more. As the Lich-Queen leads the githyanki in the conquest of Pharagos, this Gith cult grows in numbers as well as in expectation: many githyanki now believe that Gith is only waiting for the completion of this great crusade before she returns to rule her people in a kingdom that will have no end.

Finally, many githyanki—particularly warlocks—would consider themselves spiritual, even without any devotion to a deity. For these gith warlocks, serving as a physical conduit for magical energy, particularly negative energy, is an ineffable experience of transcendence. They lose themselves in a power greater than themselves, channeling the cosmic forces of the universe in the service of a will higher than their own. Most githyanki knights (blackguards) describe their use of unholy power in similar terms.

A Life of War

The culture and society of the githyanki are defined above all else by the constant readiness for war. Living on the Astral Plane means that they need to spend little effort on what most races consider the basic necessities of life, giving them as a race the freedom to train most of their population in the craft of war. As a result, the majority of githyanki are githwarriors, warlocks, or gish. While the mlars and hr'a'ckirs serve vitally important functions, without which the military machinery would grind to a halt, the war-trained castes command far greater respect and hold the reins of power. A githyanki's skill in combat, whether that be measured by martial prowess or arcane achievement, ultimately determines his status in githyanki society.

The members of the war-trained castes live a life of constant preparation—training, tending to arms and armor, learning new maneuvers, new spells, new techniques for cleanly and elegantly disemboweling or decapitating a foe. Githyanki society has no familial units and recognizes no bonds of affection, so the closest relationship a githyanki is likely to have is with her mentor and those she trains herself. The training relationship is the philosophical and practical ideal of the interaction between githyanki—in a perfect world, a githyanki would learn from every word she hears and likewise instruct with every word she utters, to the ultimate betterment of the race.

All githyanki, from the hr'a'cknirs and mlars to the githwarriors and warlocks, strive to better themselves in order to bring the githyanki race as a whole closer to perfection. Self-betterment means rising as high as possible in one's chosen profession: if a githyanki is a ghustil by training and preference, then she strives to be the best ghustil she can possibly be. The knights who serve the Lich-Queen directly are treated with such reverence in part because they embody this ideal, honing themselves to a keen edge like the *silver swords* they wield until they literally transcend themselves, channeling a power that is beyond their mortal frames. This constant striving for self-improvement is born of the githyanki's deep-seated paranoia.

With the Lich-Queen's declaration of war upon the world of Pharagos, a life of military preparedness has now become a life of active warfare. All githyanki are expected to contribute to the war to the best of their ability, in whatever ways are suited to their castes and professions. Naturally, this has the greatest impact upon the githwarriors, warlocks, and gish, who have been mobilized for active duty and now pour through color pools into the Material Plane to wage the Lich-Queen's war.

Weapons, Armor, and the Tools of War

Githyanki have a grim fascination with weapons and armor born from their constant training and preparation for war. They forge weapons and armor with elaborate decoration—ornate pommels, engraved blades, intricate tracings along plates of armor, and so on—and keep them impeccably clean, polished, and sharpened. A githyanki whose weapons or armor are in ill repair is viewed with scorn by other githyanki, and may even be accused of treason for not remaining prepared to fight in the Lich-Queen's service.

Weapons

As a race, githyanki favor long blades, often curved, and teach fighting styles that involve flamboyant flourishes of the blade. They are fond of greatswords, bastard swords, longswords, scimitars, halberds, glaives, scythes, and similar weapons of their own devising. Table 3–2: Githyanki Weapons shows game statistics for a number of exotic blades of githyanki invention.

Bladed Armor: You can add blades to your armor, which can inflict damage in a grapple or as a separate attack. See **Armor**, below.

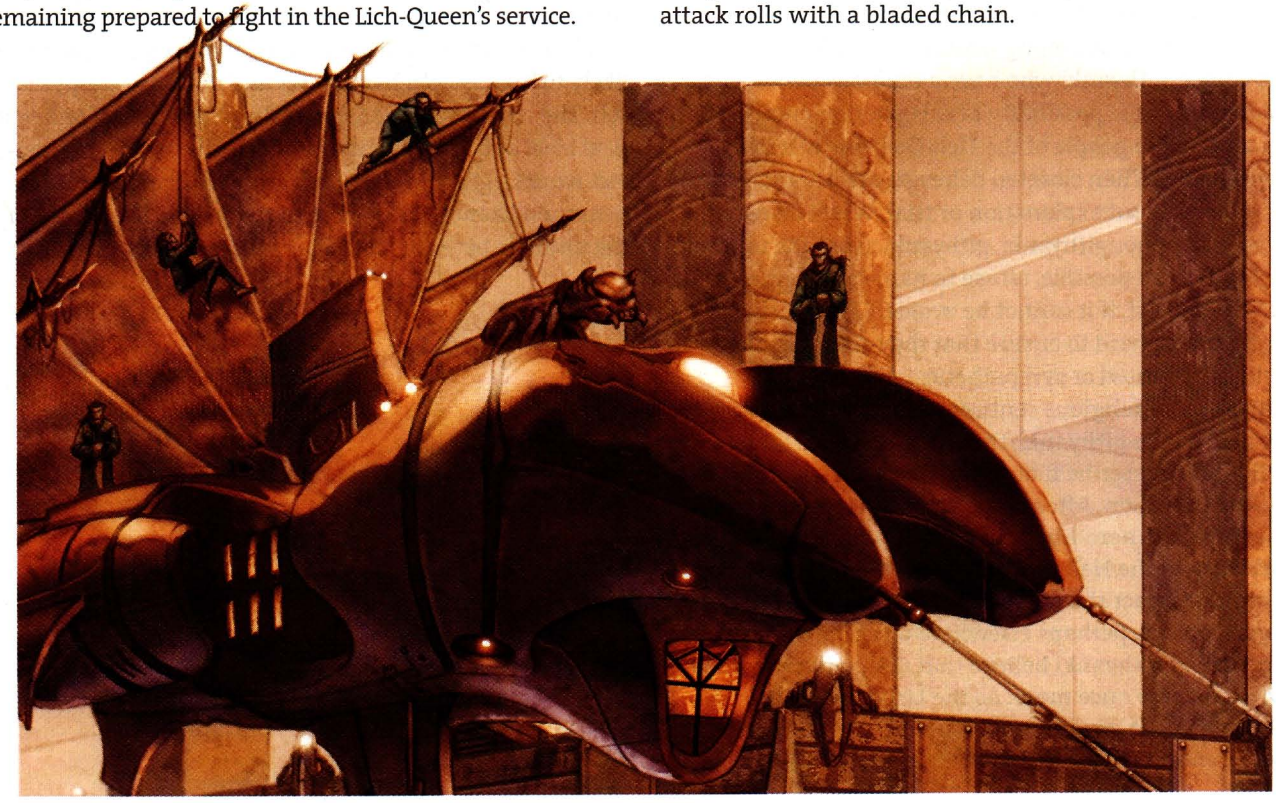
Chain, Bladed: A bladed chain is a long chain made of razor-sharp blades, with only two blunt areas where the chain can be safely held. It can be used either as a double weapon or as a reach weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, incurring all the normal attack penalties as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. In this case, you can only strike at an adjacent opponent.

If you use the bladed chain as a reach weapon, you can strike opponents 10 feet away with it. In addition, unlike other weapons with reach, you can use it against an adjacent foe. In this case, you can only use one end of the bladed chain effectively; you cannot use it as a double weapon.

You can make trip attacks with a bladed chain. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the bladed chain to avoid being tripped.

When using a bladed chain, you get a +2 bonus on your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if you fail to disarm your opponent).

You can use the Weapon Finesse feat to apply your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier to attack rolls with a bladed chain.



Marc Sasso

Crescent Blade: A short haft with a crescent-shaped blade on the end, the crescent blade is a special monk weapon, which gives a monk wielding a crescent blade special options.

Crescent Blade, Double: A double crescent blade is a double weapon, a straight wooden haft with a crescent-shaped blade at each end. The double crescent blade is a special monk weapon, which gives a monk wielding a double crescent blade special options.

Crossbow, Triple: A triple crossbow is a light crossbow that has been modified to hold three bolts in firing position at once, with three strings that can be released either all at once or one at a time. In the simplest method of use, which any character proficient with a light crossbow can do with no penalty, the crossbow can simply be fired normally three times before reloading, which requires a full-round action. The crossbow cannot be reloaded until all three bolts have been fired.

A character who has Exotic Weapon Proficiency with this weapon can fire three bolts at once as a standard action. The character makes a single attack roll with a –6 penalty, and the target must be within 30 feet. If the attack roll indicates a hit, the character rolls damage for all three bolts. Damage reduction or other resistances apply separately against each bolt fired. Regardless of the number of bolts fired, precision-based damage (such as sneak attack damage) applies only once. On a critical hit, only one bolt inflicts critical damage; all others inflict normal damage.

Scythe, Githyanki Double: A githyanki double scythe is a double weapon, a complex haft with a scythe blade at each end.

Scythe-Sword, Githyanki: A githyanki scythe-sword is a double weapon with a scythe blade at one end and a long, slightly curved sword blade at the other.

Scimitar, Githyanki Double: A githyanki double scimitar is a double weapon, similar to a two-bladed sword but with shorter, curving blades.

Silver Swords

The *Monster Manual* describes the most common form of *silver sword*, which is a *+3 greatsword* that requires an Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to master, with the ability to sever an astral traveler's silver cord. This ability is actually a weapon property, and weapons with this property can be made with any enhancement bonus and other properties.

Silver Sword: A weapon with this property looks much like a standard githyanki weapon. When drawn in melee, however, the blade transforms into a column of silvery liquid, altering the weapon's balance round by round as the blade's shape flows and shimmers. A user who has the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*) feat and who is on the Astral Plane can attack the silver cord that connects the astral form of an astrally projecting traveler to its material counterpart. The normally insubstantial cord is treated as a tangible object with the owner's AC, hardness 10, and 20 hit points. A silver cord visibly trails 5 feet behind an astral traveler before fading into the astral medium. Attacking it draws an attack of opportunity from the astral traveler unless the wielder of the *silver sword* has the Silver Cord Strike feat.

When the cord is damaged, the astral traveler must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 13) or be immediately forced to return to its body—which might be a good idea anyway if the traveler is not up to fighting githyanki on

Table 3–2: Githyanki Weapons

Martial Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Light melee							
Bladed armor	special	1d4	1d6	19–20/×2	—	n/a	Slashing
Exotic Weapons	**Cost**	**Dmg (S)**	**Dmg (M)**	**Critical**	**Range Increment**	**Weight**	**Type**
One-handed melee							
Crescent blade	15 gp	1d6	1d8	×2	—	4 lb.	Slashing
Two-handed melee							
Chain, bladed	40 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	19–20/×2	—	5 lb.	Slashing
Crescent blade, double‡	90 gp	1d6/1d6	1d8/1d8	×2	—	7 lb.	Slashing
Scythe, githyanki double‡	100 gp	1d6/1d6	2d4/2d4	×4	—	20 lb.	Slashing and piercing
Scythe-sword, githyanki‡	120 gp	1d6/1d6	2d4/1d8	×4 and 19–20/×2	—	15 lb.	Slashing and piercing/Slashing
Scimitar, githyanki double‡	95 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	18–20/×2	—	10 lb.	Slashing
Ranged							
Crossbow, triple	150 gp	1d6	1d8	19–20/×2	80 ft.	6 lb.	Piercing
Bolts (9)	1 gp	—	—		—	1 lb.	—

‡ Double weapon: You can fight with a double weapon as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. A creature using a double weapon in one hand, such as a Large creature using a Medium-size double crescent blade, can't use it as a double weapon.

their home plane. Severing the silver cord completely destroys utterly both the astral form and the body on the Material Plane.

Moderate necromancy; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a githyanki; Price +4 bonus.

The *+5 vorpal silver swords* described as minor artifacts in the *Monster Manual* are actually epic weapons with a market price of 3,920,350 gp. These swords are all ancient in make, predating the reign of the Lich-Queen. Forged in a time when githyanki were allowed to reach epic levels, these swords are only handed down to the greatest heroes of the race. Slightly more common are the *+3 unholy silver swords* wielded by the most powerful githyanki knights; these weapons have a market price of 162,350 gp.

Armor

From a distance, a troop of githwarriors might appear human—were it not for the baroque ornamentation of their armor. Most forms of githyanki armor are simply variations on the common armor types detailed in the *Player's Handbook*—githyanki full plate is much more elaborate than most forms of full plate, but its armor bonus, armor check penalty, maximum Dexterity bonus, and weight are the same as any masterwork suit of full plate. Almost all githyanki armor is masterwork—anything worth doing is worth doing well, at least where armor and weapons are concerned—and features armor spikes or armor blades (described below).

Armor Blades: You can have blades added to your armor. They allow you to deal extra slashing damage (see Table 3–2: Githyanki Weapons) with a successful grapple attack. The blades count as a martial weapon. If you are not proficient with them, you suffer a –4 penalty on grapple checks when you try to use them. You also can make a regular melee attack (or off-hand attack) with the blades, and they count as a light weapon in this case. (You can't also make an attack with armor blades if you've already made an attack with another off-hand weapon, and vice versa.)

An enhancement bonus to a suit of armor's armor bonus does not improve the blades' effectiveness, but the blades can be made into magic weapons in their own right.

Beaded Armor: The githyanki equivalent of scale mail, beaded armor consists of large metal plates—each one individually engraved, often adorned with gemstones and precious metal—strung like beads on a vertical leather cord reaching from the shoulders to a similarly plated strap around the waist. The shoulders are protected with an elaborate series of articulated metal plates that add the appearance of muscularity to the wearer's gaunt frame. (The githyanki favor the same style in their plate armors and breastplates.) A skirt of metal beads on leather straps hangs down from the waist, and engraved metal greaves and vambraces add protection to the extremities. A leather coat underneath protects the torso from weapons that might find their way between the metal plates.

Mounts and Vessels of War

Most githyanki, and especially knights, like to go into battle mounted while on the Material Plane. They are so accustomed to the high speed of movement and combat on the Astral Plane that fighting on foot feels unbearably slow. Naturally, knights often ride the red dragons (or fiendish red dragons) who obey the githyanki because of Gith's ancient pact with Ephelomon, consort of Tiamat. Other favorite mounts include nightmares, hieracosphinxes, and spider eaters.

Githyanki knights typically prefer riding juvenile or young adult red dragons. Younger dragons are too immature, while older ones are simply too large. The most powerful knights sometimes ride adult or even mature adult dragons, but red dragons any older than mature adult are more powerful than any githyanki rider, and they know it. Even Ephelomon's pact with Gith can't prevent an old red dragon from unbearable condescension toward a githyanki rider whose power, impressive though it may be, pales in comparison to the dragon's great might.

A nightmare can carry 300 pounds as a light load, 600 pounds as a medium load, and 900 pounds as a heavy load. A foal costs 5,000 gp. Nightmares cannot be trained, and will serve only cruel and evil masters who both dominate them and reward them with plenty of opportunity to spread pain and destruction. The Nightmare Mount feat allows a githyanki blackguard to acquire a loyal nightmare mount.

A hieracosphinx can carry 459 pounds as a light load, 918 pounds as a medium load, and 1,380 pounds as a heavy load. An egg costs 5,500 gp. Like nightmares, hieracosphinxes are too intelligent to train with the Handle Animal skill, but they are much more pliable through bribes and threats than nightmares are.

A spider eater can carry 612 pounds as a light load, 1,224 pounds as a medium load, and 1,840 pounds as a heavy load. An egg costs 2,000 gp, while a young spider eater costs 3,000 gp. Training a spider eater requires six weeks of work

Table 3–3: Armor and Shields

Armor	Cost	Armor/Shield Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed (30 ft.)	Speed (20 ft.)	Weight‡
Medium armor								
Beaded	80 gp	+4	+4	–4	20%	20 ft.	15 ft.	27 lb.
Extras								
Armor blades	+65 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—	+10 lb.

and a successful Handle Animal check (DC 25). Riding a spider eater requires an exotic saddle. A spider eater can fight while carrying a rider, but the rider cannot also attack unless he or she succeeds at a Ride check (see the Ride skill in Chapter 4 in the *Player's Handbook*). Professional trainers charge 3,000 gp to rear or train a spider eater.

Astral Ships: On the Astral Plane, the githyanki commonly fight from massive astral ships—vessels that vary from the size of a small keelboat carrying a single squad of soldiers to that of a massive galleon with a crew of hundreds. Powered by magical sails that catch the motion of astral energies, these ships are normally useless on the Material Plane where no such arcane winds blow.

For centuries, githyanki mlar and hr'a'cknir have worked together to create magic items to enable these astral ships to fly through the skies of a Material Plane world. Armed with *spines of earthly wind*, astral vessels now sail through portals to the Material Plane and darken the sky of Pharagos carrying the Lich-Queen's armies.

Astral Skiff: Huge vehicle; Profession (sailor) +0; Spd fly 120 ft. (average); Overall AC 3; Section hp 40 (hardness 10); Section AC 3; Ram 4d8; Face 15 ft. by 5 ft.; Height 10 ft.; SA ramming prow; Crew 1 (carries 3); Cargo 1 ton (Spd 100 ft. if 1/2 ton or more).

Astral Brig: Gargantuan vehicle; Profession (sailor) +0; Spd fly 90 ft. (average); Overall AC 1; Section hp 40 (hardness 10); Section AC 3; Ram 8d8; Size 60 ft. by 20 ft.; Height 10 ft.; SA great ballista, ramming prow; Crew 1 (carries 50); cargo 40 tons (Spd 60 ft. if 20 tons or more).

Planar Raider: Colossal vehicle; Profession (sailor) +0; Spd fly 50 ft. (poor); Overall AC –3; Section hp 40 (hardness 10); Section AC 3; Ram 10d10; Size 100 ft. by 30 ft.; Height 15 ft.; SA 10 great ballistae, ramming prow; Crew 1 (carries 100); cargo 150 tons (Spd 30 ft. if 75 tons or more).

Githyanki Technology

The githyanki boast a number of magical and nonmagical innovations to aid in planar conquest.

Great Ballista: A great ballista is essentially a Colossal heavy crossbow fixed in place. Its size makes it hard for most creatures to aim it, as described under Weapon Size on page 113 of the *Player's Handbook*. Thus, a Medium creature takes a –8 penalty on attack rolls when using a ballista, and a Small creature takes a –10 penalty. Each member of a great ballista's crew (to a maximum of 3) can attempt to aid the operator's ranged attack with a special use of the aid another action, providing a +2 to hit for each crew member that succeeds at a ranged attack roll against AC 10. Fortunately, great ballistae are usually fired at buildings, ships, and other exceedingly large targets. It takes four full-round actions to reload and ready the great ballista after firing due to the complicated system of cranks and winches that enable creatures to cock the powerful weapon. Each full-round task can be done by a different member of the great ballista's crew, allowing it to be reloaded and ready to fire after 1 full round. A great ballista takes up a space 10 feet across.

Cost: 1,000 gp; *Damage:* 6d8; *Critical:* (19-20) ×2; *Range Increment:* 120 ft.; *Typical crew:* 4.

Spine of Earthly Wind: A Huge air elemental is bound within a column of mithral shaped like a spine that runs from a control skull to fuse with the keel of a githyanki astral ship. Astral ships with a *spine of earthly wind* can sail the skies of a Material Plane world. The vessel's fly speed on such a world is equal to its astral speed minus 10 feet, and its maneuverability is reduced by one class (from good to average, average to poor, or poor to clumsy). A *spine of earthly wind* has no effect on any vehicle other than an astral ship.

The control skull of an astral ship is shaped like an illithid skull and serves as the focus point for the pilot of the ship. A githyanki touching a control skull perceives the world around it as though the ship and its contents are transparent. The githyanki can then mentally control the ship's movement as a full-round action, making Profession (sailor) skill checks as necessary. A non-githyanki suffers 4 negative levels while touching the control skull, which disappear after the skull is released, but can attempt to pilot the ship normally. The skull follows the mental commands of the last person to touch it, so control of the ship is maintained by keeping threats from entering the pilot room the control skull is typically housed in. A ship without a pilot continues on the course of its last command.

A *spine of earthly wind* or a control skull can be damaged by attacks or spells like any magic item. Note that both are composed of mithral; each has a hardness of 15 and 250 hit points for the purposes of causing enough damage to destroy it. Destroying the *spine* releases the angry elemental to the Prime Material and causes the ship's flight magic to fail, sending it plummeting to the ground. When a control skull is destroyed, the astral ship travels at its highest speed in whatever direction the ship is pointing until it collides with an object large enough to stop it or until the ship is sufficiently damaged to destroy it. No method can regain control of the ship, but a *dismissal* spell cast on the *spine* after the skull is destroyed releases the elemental trapped inside to the Elemental Plane of Air and causes the ship to fall.

Strong conjuration; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, binding, greater planar binding; Price 140,000 gp.

Dimensional Key: This item is usually a pin, brooch, or amulet shaped like a mundane key. Once per day, the wearer can use a *freedom of passage* effect to bypass a dimensional barrier.

Strong abjuration; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *freedom of passage*; Price 43,200 gp; *Weight:* —.

The Lich-Queen's preparations for the invasion of Pharagos go back at least a century. Two of the greatest fruits of her efforts are the result of breeding programs: the half-dragon duthka'gith and the fearsome b'kallash dreadnought. In addition to these races engineered for war, this chapter details the spectral hound, a creature supposedly bred by the githyanki centuries ago, and still used by the giths as a work animal.

Attila Adorjany

Duthka'gith

Medium-Size Dragon (Extraplanar), Fighter 1
Hit Dice: 1d10+2 (7 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 20 ft. (breastplate), base 30 ft.
AC: 20 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate), touch 11, flat-footed 19
Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+5
Attack: Masterwork greatsword +6 melee; or claw +5 melee
Full Attack: Masterwork greatsword +6 melee and bite +0 melee; or 2 claws +5 melee and bite +0 melee
Damage: Masterwork greatsword 2d6+6, bite 1d6+2, claw 1d4+4
Face/Reach: 5 ft. across/5 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, psionics, smite good
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, psionics, SR 6 (see text)
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will –1
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12
Skills: Climb +7, Intimidate +4, Jump +7
Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 3
Level Adjustment: +5
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Usually chaotic evil
Advancement: By character class

Bred to be superwarriors in the armies of the Lich-Queen, the duthka'giths are, at best, a partial success. They inherited great strength and intelligence from their draconic blood, but equal amounts of arrogance, independence, and love of havoc.

Duthka'giths have lost most of the githyanki similarity to humans. They average close to 7 feet tall and are considerably heavier than githyanki, averaging more than 210 pounds. Their skin has a definite scaled texture to it and ranges from deep red (primarily on the shoulders and back) to orange (on the palms, soles of the feet, and belly). Their hair is shaggy and wild, resisting any attempt to pull it into the formal topknots the githyanki favor. Their ears are slightly larger in proportion to their heads than a githyanki's are, but share the same serrated back edge. Their eyes gleam red, suggesting glowing black embers.

Duthka'giths speak the githyanki language and Draconic. Many also speak Common, but they share the common githyanki disdain for the languages and culture of other species.

Combat

Duthka'giths were bred to be leaders, but generally lack the discipline and focus possessed by the greatest githyanki commanders. They love wading into melee, swinging massive blades in great swathes of destruction, saving their fiery breath weapons for when they really matter, when they can decimate an entire squad of opponents.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once per day, a duthka'gith can breathe a cone of fire to sear its enemies. The 30-foot cone deals 6d8 points of fire damage to creatures within it. A successful Reflex save (DC 12) reduces the damage by half.

The DC is Constitution based and does not count the duthka'gith's class Hit Dice.

Dragon Traits: Duthka'giths are immune to *sleep* and paralysis effects. They have darkvision (60-foot range) and low-light vision.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—*daze humanoid* (DC 11) and *mage hand*. In addition, duthka'giths of 3rd level or higher can use *blur* three times per day, duthka'giths of 6th level or higher can use *dimension door* three times per day, and duthka'giths of 9th level or higher can use *telekinesis* (DC 16) three times per day and *plane shift* once per day. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the duthka'gith's level. The DCs of these abilities are Charisma based.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day a duthka'gith can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its character level against a good foe.

Spell Resistance (Su): A duthka'gith has spell resistance of 5 + 1 per character level.

Duthka'gith Characters

A duthka'gith's favored class is fighter. See Chapter 2 for more information about playing duthka'giths as characters.

Derek Thompson

B'kallash Dreadnought

Colossal Outsider (Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 30d8+450 (585 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 70 ft., fly 180 ft. (clumsy)
AC: 32 (–8 size, –1 Dex, +29 natural, +2 insight), touch 3, flat-footed 32
Base Attack/Grapple: +30/+66
Attack: Claw +42 melee
Full Attack: 2 claws +42 melee, bite +40 melee, 2 wings +40 melee, tail slap +40 melee
Damage: Claw 2d8+20, bite 4d6+10, wing 2d6+10, tail slap 2d8+30
Face/Reach: 30 ft. across/25 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, improved grab, swallow whole, rend 4d8+30
Special Qualities: Antimagic cone, DR 10/epic, fast healing 10, fire immunity, frightful presence, SR 28
Saves: Fort +32, Ref +16, Will +18
Abilities: Str 51, Dex 8, Con 41, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 18
Skills: Hide +16, Listen +35, Move Silently +32, Spot +35, Survival +35
Feats: Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Critical (bite, claw), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground (Astral Plane)
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 19
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 31–90 HD (Colossal)

Another product of the Lich-Queen's breeding programs, the b'kallash dreadnought is a hideous and terrifying beast. Spawned from a creature that has never before been tamed or controlled, the astral dreadnought (detailed in *Manual of the Planes*), the b'kallash also has traits and abilities derived from the red dragons allied with the githyanki. The b'kallash dreadnought is bred to be a near-mindless weapon of war, a brutal monstrosity send ahead of githyanki forces to soften the forces that might resist their march.

A b'kallash dreadnought is as large as a titan, massively muscled, and covered from head to tail in thick, spiked plates with a rusty brown color. Its two arms end in sharp, pincer-like claws, and two great draconic wings sprout from its shoulders. Its legs are like those of a dragon, and the creature can walk on these legs or run on

all fours as it chooses. A long, whiplike tail echoes the apparently infinite tail of the astral dreadnought, but the b'kallash dreadnought lashes its tail about in combat like a dragon does. Its single eye seems to smolder with an internal fire.

B'kallash dreadnoughts are capable of grunting a few words in Draconic.

Combat

A b'kallash dreadnought is nowhere near as smart as a dragon, and occasionally forgets to use its breath weapon. Keeping its eye on the most dangerous foes is a basic instinct, however, so it is well able to keep its antimagic cone trained on threatening spellcasters while rending fighters with its claws and tail.

While airborne, a b'kallash dreadnought cannot attack with its wings, but it can use all four of its claws. It cannot rend with its rear claws.

Antimagic Cone (Su): A b'kallash dreadnought's single eye continually produces a 150-foot antimagic cone extending straight ahead from the creature's front. This functions just like antimagic field cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, with the exception noted below. Once each round, during its turn, the b'kallash dreadnought decides which way its eye faces. The b'kallash dreadnought can make only bite attacks against creatures to its front.

All magical, spell-like, and supernatural effects within the cone are suppressed, with one exception. If the b'kallash dreadnought is on the Astral Plane, the antimagic cone does not suppress spells or effects that brought other creatures to the Astral Plane (the astral projection spell, for example). Those effects are locked in place while the subjects are in the cone and cannot be dismissed, trapping the subjects on the Astral Plane while under its effect.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 70 feet long, once per 1d4 rounds; damage 20d10, Reflex half DC 40. The DC is Constitution based. A b'kallash dreadnought must close its eye to use its breath weapon. Characters within the cone of the breath therefore receive the benefit of any magical bonuses on their saving throws or magical resistance to fire. It is possible for characters to ready an action until the dreadnought's eye is closed, attacking during this instant as though the dreadnought were blind (though its Blind-Fight feat reduces the benefit of this tactic).

Frightful Presence (Ex): The mere sight of a b'kallash dreadnought can unsettle or even panic opponents. The ability takes effect automatically whenever the b'kallash dreadnought attacks or moves within 200 feet of a foe. Those within range must succeed at a Will save (DC 29) or be affected. The DC is Charisma based. Creatures with 4 HD or fewer become panicked for 4d6 rounds, and those with 5 HD or more become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Those who succeed at the Will save are immune to the b'kallash dreadnought's frightful presence for one day.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the b'kallash dreadnought must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it automatically deals bite damage and can attempt to swallow the foe the following round. A creature held in the dreadnought's mouth receives no saving throw against its breath weapon.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A b'kallash dreadnought can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 4d6+20 points of crushing damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage and 2d8 points of fire damage per round from the dreadnought's gizzard. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 35 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 24). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

The b'kallash dreadnought's gullet can hold two Gargantuan, four Huge, eight Large, sixteen Medium-size, or thirty-two Small or smaller opponents.

Rend (Ex): A b'kallash dreadnought that hits with both claw attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an additional 4d8+30 points of damage.

Spectral Hound

Medium-size Magical Beast (Extraplanar, Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 5d10+5 (32 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 40 ft.
AC: 13 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 11
Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+7
Attack: Bite +7 melee
Full Attack: Bite +7 melee
Damage: Bite 1d8+3
Face/Reach: 5 ft. across/5 ft.
Special Attacks: Astral sickness, ghost touch bite
Special Qualities: Astral tracking, incorporeal, plane shift, scent
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 8
Skills: Listen +6, Spot +4, Survival +4*
Feats: Alertness, Track

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground (Astral Plane)
Organization: Solitary or pack (2–8)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 6–8 HD (Medium-size); 9–15 HD (Large)

Spectral hounds are supernatural canines bred for a single purpose: to track quarry across the planes.

A spectral hound appears as a ghostly, insubstantial dog of indeterminate breed, resembling something like a large, broad jackal. Its translucent fur is smoky white and its eyes are inky black voids. Its jaws are large and strong

like a hyena's, and its teeth protrude from its mouth. They track and hunt in eerie silence.

The githyanki claim to have bred spectral hounds, perhaps from another variety of planar dog or perhaps from more mundane stock. If that is true, they did not guard the secret of their origin as fiercely as they protect most racial secrets, for spectral hounds are now widely used by deities, demons, and celestials who live or travel on the Astral Plane. They are widely domesticated, particularly among the githyanki, but occasionally roam wild on the Astral Plane.

Spectral hounds do not speak. They generally understand commands in a variety of languages, including Githyanki, Infernal, Abyssal, and Celestial.

Combat

Domesticated spectral hounds attack if they are commanded to, though they hesitate to fight to the death. Wild spectral hounds attack only if they clearly outnumber their prey, and flee quickly from superior foes.

Astral Sickness (Su): Supernatural disease—slam, Fortitude save (DC 13), incubation period 1 hour; damage 1d6 temporary Strength. The DC is Constitution based. Unlike normal diseases, astral sickness continues until the victim reaches Strength 0 or is cured.

An afflicted creature whose Strength reaches 0 from astral sickness becomes permanently incorporeal. His equipment remains fully corporeal and falls off his incorporeal form unless it has the *ghost touch* property. Once this occurs, *remove disease* no longer has any effect on the character, as the disease has run its course. A *remove curse* or *break enchantment* spell can restore the character to full corporeality, but the victim's incorporeality means that any such spell fails 50% of the time. Once restored to corporeal form, the character is incapable of movement until his lost Strength returns to him. A character who has been incorporeal for 12 hours shifts to the Astral Plane in his incorporeal form. Once this occurs, any would-be rescuers must find the victim in the endless void of the Astral Plane in order to restore him to corporeality and return him to his home plane. Of course, the victim is free to try to find his own way back to his home plane through an astral color pool or a *plane shift* spell, but he remains incorporeal.

Astral Tracking (Su): A spectral hound can attempt to track normally even through the featureless wastes of the Astral Plane (base DC 25). A spectral hound can use this ability to track quarry that uses a teleportation spell to travel, by entering the Astral Plane at the departure point, following the trail of the teleportation through the Astral Plane, and returning to the plane of departure at its quarry's destination.

Ghost Touch Bite (Su): The bite of a spectral hound affects both corporeal and incorporeal creatures normally, as though it were a weapon with the *ghost touch* property. It cannot affect ethereal creatures.

Incorporeal (Su): Immune to all nonmagical attack forms. 50% chance to ignore damage from any corporeal source. Pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will.

Plane Shift (Sp): A spectral hound can travel from the Astral Plane to any plane that borders the Astral Plane and back again. This ability is similar to a *plane shift* spell, except that the spectral hound can transport itself only and it can choose its destination with pinpoint accuracy.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet. Track by scent.

Skills: *Spectral hounds receive a +10 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent (including tracking on the Astral Plane).

Training a Spectral Hound

Training a spectral hound requires six weeks of work and a successful Handle Animal check (DC 25). Spectral hound whelps are worth 5,000 gp apiece on the open market. Professional trainers charge 1,500 gp to rear or train a spectral hound.

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Chapter 3: The Invasion of Pharagos

Pharagos is an unremarkable Material-Plane world, a far cry from the hotbed of magical activity and divine intervention that is the Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting or the World of Greyhawk. It holds only three major land masses, each one dominated by a different intelligent race.

Humans are the undisputed masters of Acclasia, the largest continent. Their empire, known as the Radiant Kingdom, has absorbed several smaller kingdoms of humans, elves, and gnomes, and owns small holdings on the other two continents as well. The Radiant Kingdom is ruled by priests, but the humans of Pharagos know no deities, instead revering a mystic source of energy that powers their divine magic and, they believe, gives all things life.

The continent of Yavvan is only slightly smaller than Acclasia, but its Ringing Mountains surround a vast arid region called the Wasting Desert, making most of its land uninhabitable. Sixteen dwarven kingdoms divide the available land, sustained by the rich mineral resources of the Ringing Mountains. They make occasional forays into the Wasting Desert, where they have discovered a number of ancient ruins half-buried beneath the eternally blowing sands, apparently left behind by a long-lost human culture. Orcs also dwell in the Ringing Mountains, their relationship with the dwarves tense but rarely violent. The orcs actively trade with the small outpost of the Radiant Kingdom on the southern coast of Yavvan, and half-orcs are plentiful there.

The smallest continent, Hoquan, is home to the smallest folk, the halflings. Criss-crossed by rivers, Hoquan is a marshy land, dominated in the east by a large swamp called the Undying Green. The halflings of Hoquan pole rafts and barges along the rivers and into the swamps, competing with lizardfolk for resources. The halflings have a complex network of loyalties and power, with chieftains owing allegiance to each other in no clear hierarchy. The Undying Green is home to both dangerous plant creatures and undead, and it is said that any creature that dies in its waters rises as a zombie, or worse, with the next new moon. The Radiant Kingdom holds a small peninsula on the relatively dry west coast.

The three continents lie close together in one hemisphere of Pharagos, surrounded by a vast and largely unexplored World Sea. If oceanic islands lie farther from the main bodies of land than a few days' travel, none of Pharagos's natives are aware of them. The Radiant Kingdom, of all Pharagos's nations, has shown the most interest in exploration and conquest, but it has so far discovered nothing beyond its immediate reach.

The ancient history of Pharagos holds a secret that could spell the world's doom. Deep in a chasm at the heart of the Wasting Desert lies the petrified corpse of a long-dead deity. Unknown to any of Pharagos's inhabitants, this corpse's eternal emanations are the source of all magical power in the world and the true source of the Radiant Kingdom's theology. To Vlaakith the githyanki Lich-Queen, however, that dead goddess is far more important: she was once the patron deity of the human ancestors of the githyanki and githzerai. The human ruins the dwarves explore in the Wasting Desert are the

incredibly ancient remains of the human civilization from which the gith races were born, the crowning glory of the race before the mind flayers came and enslaved them all. The gith slaves abandoned their faith in this deity of patience and perseverance when they took up the cause of rebellion, and she grew weak. As Gith's rebellion reached its height, an illithid demigod slew this goddess, and she has lain forgotten in that chasm ever since. The Lich-Queen has learned of the divine corpse's presence and seeks to claim its power and elevate herself to godhood, simultaneously claiming truly divine power and obliterating all evidence that her people ever gave their reverence to anyone but her and her predecessors.

Incursion: The Big Picture

In planning the invasion of Pharagos, Vlaakith faces a difficult balancing act: What she wants lies in the Wasting Desert. If the inhabitants of Pharagos discover what she seeks, however, her plans are ruined. Thus, she cannot draw too much attention to the Wasting Desert and the activities of her knights and greatest heroes there. In fact, one might say that the entire invasion is little more than a diversion—a massive mobilization of the entire githyanki race to make the world look away from Vlaakith's real goal.

As a result, Vlaakith sends most of her forces toward Acclasia. As the largest and most organized nation of Pharagos, the Radiant Kingdom poses the greatest threat, or so she believes. By dispatching a few b'kallash dreadnoughts and the bulk of her forces to the Radiant Kingdom, she believes she can decimate that empire and raze its capital in a matter of months. The rest of the world, thereafter, will pose little threat.

Naturally, Vlaakith underestimates the rest of the world. As the Radiant Kingdom stands on its last legs, a strange alliance of nearly all of Pharagos's native races arises to offer a new challenge to the Lich-Queen's armies. Halflings and lizardfolk from the swamps of Hoquan, dwarves and orcs from the Ringing Mountains of Yavvan, ogres, giants, and minotaurs from the Wasting Desert, even grimlock battalions from the deep subterranean regions below the desert, march together with the shattered remnants of the Radiant Kingdom to fight the githyanki as one. Taken aback by this surprising show of unity, Vlaakith finds the war turning against her.

The outcome of the invasion, naturally, depends on the actions of the player characters in your campaign.

The Incursion Campaign

In the *Knights of the Lich-Queen* game, the player characters are githyanki (and duthka'gith) soldiers in the invading armies attacking Pharagos, or possibly mercenaries of other races allied with the githyanki. Assuming that you start the PCs at 1st level, or at least low levels, they should begin the campaign as ordinary soldiers, only distinguished by their actions as the campaign progresses. Under the command of a sarth who is at least 6th level, githyanki squads made up of 4 to 6 githwarriors and gish and one warlock of 1st to 6th level are the basic military unit of the githyanki armies. A squad is conveniently close to the size of a typical player character party, which offers a variety opportunities for PCs to serve the Lich-Queen:

- The PCs might be members of a squad sent into the Radiant Kingdom on a scouting mission. If the sarth and any other NPC members of the unit are killed in action, the PCs have the opportunity to distinguish themselves by completing their mission and returning important information about enemy defenses.
- The PCs might fight in a large battle where they are captured thanks to enemy magic. (*Sleep*, *hold person*, and similar spells can force a githyanki to submit to captivity even against her usual inclination to fight to the death.) In a prison camp, the PCs must band together to plan their escape—again, possibly acquiring important information along the way.

As they reach medium levels (around 6th), the PCs have a new array of possibilities before them. Prestige classes become available, as do higher ranks in the military order. At this point, the campaign could go in any of a number of directions, depending on the inclinations of the players:

- If the PCs strive to become sarths and kajorrs, they serve under the same commanders, and their units go into battle together. This gives them the opportunity to view the war from a more tactical perspective, leading and commanding their followers as they strike against the defenders of Pharagos. This can be particularly satisfying with the use of mass combat rules.
- Sometimes, a single PC's choice of prestige class can help determine the direction of the campaign. A character who becomes a gish mindslayer, for example, might lead the other PCs on a strike mission into the subterranean reaches below the Wasting Desert, where mind flayers reign supreme. Beside satisfying the githyanki need to destroy illithids, these missions also serve the useful military purpose of cutting of supply lines to the grimlock forces that have allied with the surface-dwellers against the invading githyanki. Similarly, a sword stalker PC can lead other PCs on missions to retrieve *silver swords* stolen from knights who fell in battle.

By 11th level or so, the PCs are the real heroes of the invading armies. One of them might be a knight taking orders directly from the Lich-Queen by this point, and their focus is likely to change. Particularly as they draw near the end of their careers (14th level or so), they will spend more of their time in the Wasting Desert. The chasm that holds the dead goddess is at the center of a swirling maelstrom of magic, and has drawn many dangerous creatures to itself, including many servants of good who seek to protect the corpse from Vlaakith's reach. Here is an excellent opportunity for the PCs to battle good dragons, celestials, and such creatures as couatls and lammasus, in addition to the standard evil monsters who, like the forces of good, have no interest in seeing the githyanki conquer their world.

KYLE HUNTER'S

Downer

Downer is led deeper into the Underdark by a cadre of the beholder's twisted henchmen. These miscreants have questioned Downer's loyalty after he allowed two invading adventurers to escape unharmed. Our hero's patience wears thin as he begins his third hour of unpaid overtime and is called in front of his horrible, horrible boss.

PART III

EYE BOOGERS

ALL HAIL BELOVED LORD MANGLECRAMPS!
MILORD, YOU SEE ALL WITH MONOCULAR CLARITY. AS YOU DIRECTED, I HAVE BROUGHT THE COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH WING'S GUARD, DOWNER.

BLEERAAARGH! WAAARAAH! PUNY DROW! ALL YOUR GUARDS ARE DEAD! MANY BY YOUR OWN PETULANT HAND.
I AM DISPLEASED! EXPLAIN YOURSELF. I RISKED MUCH BY HELPING YOU, AND ONLY BECAUSE OF YOUR GLORIOUS PAST. NOW I SEE I SHOULD HAVE PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY. WUUAARGH!

I'LL HANG THOSE GNOMISH WINGS OF YOURS OVER MY MANTLE! TASTE LOLTH'S WRATH!
SHUT THE HELL UP!
GUH--
I TOLD YOU DOWNER COULDN'T BE TRUSTED!
HE'S A LOOSE CANNON-- A THREAT TO EVERY-ONE SINCE THAT SKANKY MEDUSA WAS KILLED!
ENOUGH! WRRAAUGH! THAT'S IT! MALOK, PUNISH HIM! SMASH HIM GOOD!
HA HA, WHAT A QUARRELSOME LITTLE FAMILY.
YOU'VE FOUND OUR PRIZE? EXCELLENT! MY BLADE'S HUNGER HAS ONLY BEEN PIQUED.
I WAS RIGHT. SCRYING THAT FILTHY DROW HAS REVEALED THE HEART OF THE BEHOLDER'S LAIR. GATHER TOGETHER AND WE'LL USE ANOTHER DIMENSION DOOR.
GIRD YOURSELVES THIS WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT AT HALF OUR NUMBER.
FINALLY, THIS PLACE WILL BE CLEANSED OF THAT HORRID ABERRATION--
--THE WARDEN OF CARCERI'S WILL BE DONE.

Story and art by **Kyle Stanley Hunter.** Lettering by **Sean Glenn.** A **Super Unicorn** production. **www.superunicorn.com**
Pariyare Translation for #2 *bijou*: small; *palaver*: discussion; *joggering omee*: entertainer; *niffed*: killed; *madzerette*: halfling; *gajo*: stranger.